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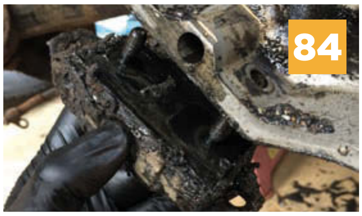

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VOLKS WORLD

The June 2018 issue goes on sale
Friday 4 May
Don't miss it!

Editor Ian Cushway – volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

Welcome to the mag

By the time you read this, hopefully I'll be rubbing my hands in glee at the fact that my '68 Beetle successfully trundled from Brittany to Sandown Park and back for The *VolksWorld* Show. If it didn't make it, I'll have a whole load of egg on my face. That said, hopefully it won't be down to any fault on my behalf. After all, I'd religiously done the necessary preparation, planned the longer 'lanes' route in advance, got the warning triangle ready and programmed the number of my French recovery service into my mobile. Being a firm believer in the old adage that if you pack it, you won't need it, I even took along a spare fanbelt.

There was a bit of a hiccup just before I left, however. I was about to swap over the old electronic 009 dizzy for a replacement vacuum operated distributor with traditional points, to do away with a flatspot, but before doing so a few wires came loose in the engine bay and I ended up wiring the coil the wrong way which meant the car wouldn't start. In my haste, I assumed I'd blown the coil so bought another one – but in fact it was the distributor that was toast. With the new replacement I'd bought fitted, it was business as usual. And I think the flatspot's gone, although with no pre-heat, it's still a bit lumpy from cold.

> "Peter Noad fitted some of these tailpipes to his Cartune-tweaked rally Beetle, reporting that they added a few extra horsepower"

I've also fitted some smart new stainless taper tips. They're being reproduced by the sixties accessory / tuning specialist Cartune (www.cartunevw.co.uk), which has been resurrected by Martin Lee. You might remember VW legend and former *VolksWorld* contributor Peter Noad fitted some of these tailpipes to his Cartune-tweaked rally Beetle, reporting that they added a few extra horsepower. I can't vouch for that, personally, but they look good, sound throaty and add a cool retro touch to my Bug.

Okay, I've still got the interior to do and now the BRM replicas could do with refurbishment, but at least – all being well – I am beginning to enjoy good reliability. And with it celebrating its half century this October, I am hoping to get it looking spot on by the time I get to crack open the champagne and blow out the candles…

We've got a bit of a scoop this issue, too, being one of the first magazines to publish a report on the Freddy Files 2018 event in Ninove. There was a bit of a 'Thing' going on this year and you can read Paul Knight's report on pages 70-74. There were some ultra cool rides there, but what strikes me more than anything looking at the pictures is what a fabulous weekend it makes if you cruise over in convoy and take in the town and historic brewery at the same time. Pencil it into your 'must go to in 2019' show diary.

Finally, if you like the mag and want to take out an annual subscription, check out the deal we're offering on pages 88-89. You know it makes sense.

Ian Cushway

Editor

CARTUNE
ORIGINAL TAPER TIPS

If they were good enough for VW guru Peter Noad, they're good enough for me

Who said late Beetles couldn't look ridiculously cool? Just one of the streetside attractions in Ninove this year

My dad owned a '66 Variant, but it didn't look nearly as tough as this one in Ninove. I wish it was mine…

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Here's a list of season openers to get your 2018 off to a flying start

Run a show? Why not tell us about it?

email VolksWorld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

April

Dubs Collective Euro Party in the Park

Date: 6-8 April 2018
Location: Himley Hall, Dudley DY3 4DF
Contact: www.dubscollective.com

Elemental VW Show

Date: 7 April 2018
Location: Crouch Valley Showground, Essex
Contact: www.elementalvw.org.uk

Dub Shed

Date: 6-8 April 2018
Location: Eikon Exhibition Centre, Lisburn, Northern Ireland
Contact: www.dubshed.com

Elsecar

Date: 15 April 2018
Location: Doncaster Racecourse
Contact: www.elsecarattheraces.com

Bus Types VW Show

Date: 13-15 April 2018
Location: Owestry Showground, Shropshire
Contact: www.bus-types.co.uk

World of Air

Date: 15 April 2018
Location: Olen, Belgium
Contact: www.worldofair.be

Big Bang

Date: 27-29 April 2018
Location: Santa Pod Raceway
Contact: www.big-bang.co.uk

May

The Only Meet is Essex

Date: 4-7 May 2018
Location: Orsett Showground RM16 3JU
Contact: www.vw-tomie.co.uk

Stanford Hall

Date: 6 May 2018
Location: Lutterworth, Leicestershire
Contact: www.stanfordhallvw.com

Vanwest

Date: 11-13 May 2018
Location: Burnham on Sea, Somerset
Contact: www.vanwest.co.uk

All Types VW Show

Date: 20 May 2018
Location: Bodwelwyddan Castle, North Wales
Contact: www.alltypesvwshow.co.uk

International Buggy Treffen

Date: 18-21 May 2018
Location: Full-Reuenthal Militärmuseum, Switzerland
Contact: www.buggy-club-schweiz.ch

June

Stonor VW Rally

Date: 3 July 2018
Location: Stonor Park, Henley on Thames, Oxfordshire
Contact: www.abvwc.com

Deva Dubs n Rods

Date: 8-10 May 2018
Location: Shrewsbury Showground, SYI 2PF
Contact: www.devadubshow.co.uk

Hangarz

Date: 9-10 May 2018
Location: Sporthal Nazareth, Belgium
Contact: @Hangarz

Bristol Volksfest

Date: 15-17 June 2018
Location: Birches Farm, Bristol
Contact: www.bristolvolksfest.co.uk

International Kever Weekend

Date: 15-17 June 2018
Location: Event Centre De Bergen, Wanroij, Holland
Contact: www.ikwwanroij.nl

Drive your VW to Work Day

Date: 22 June 2018
Location: Worldwide
Contact: http://www.ploon.nl

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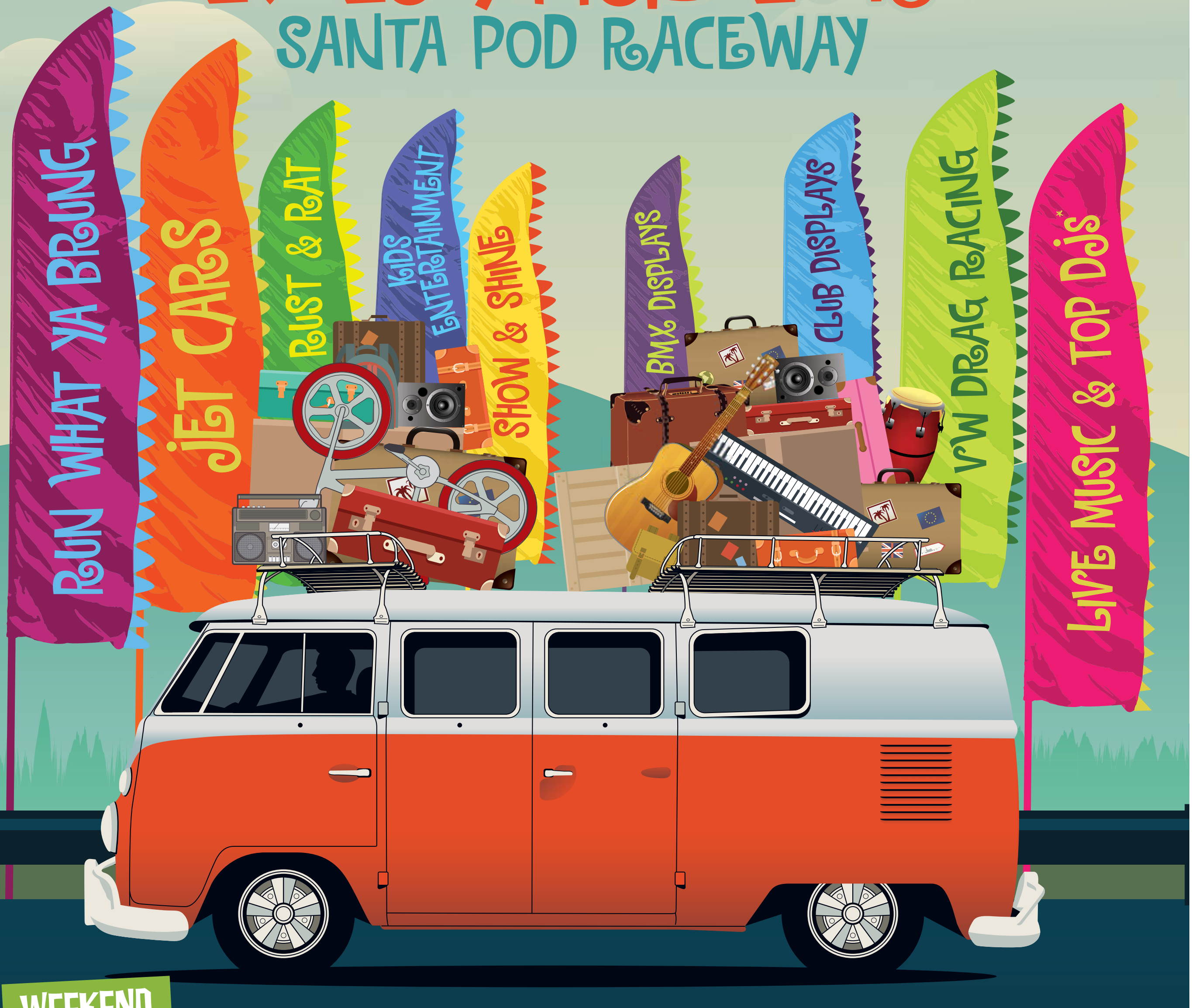
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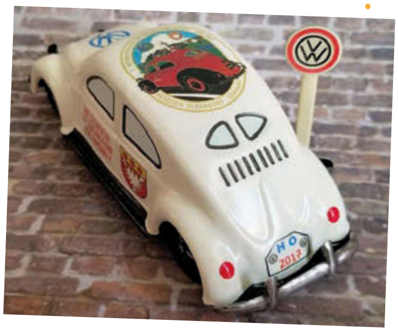
Your shout

Souvenir sensation



I went to the Hessisch Oldendorf show last year and while looking around the swapmeet area I spotted a metal 1950 US Zone GAMA Split Window Beetle model for sale. I really didn't need another one for the collection but at only €50, I couldn't resist. Someone had already performed a mild restoration because it was now blue with brush-painted silver windows.

When I got home I realised I hadn't really got a momento from the trip, so I had the idea of turning the Beetle into an HO 2017 show souvenir. So, with that said, the GAMA Split was taken apart and the paint removed to bare metal. The chassis was in really good shape and just needed some cleaning and detailing. The body was painted in Dove White with a dab of red, black and silver paint detail. A custom-made decal set was created then a couple of coats of clear paint was applied to seal everything. After final assembly, I now have my HO 2017 show souvenir!

Robert Gilmore, via email

Wow, that looks fabulous. I wouldn't be surprised if you get asked to make a few more of these – Ed.

Help sought

I am trying to trace the original owner of a company called Beetle Bits which traded in Ballymena, Co Antrim, Northern Ireland. This business operated in the 1990s and advertised occasionally in *VolksWorld* at the time. I am aware this is an unusual request, but it is very important to me.

Brian Davidson, via email

The company you're talking about is Bugbitz in Armagh (+44 28 3752 6789). It's owned by Dave Wheatley and he specialises in rebuilding engines to stock form but more importantly he builds monster engines. Most of the big engines in Ireland have been through Dave's workshop. Have a look at https://www.facebook.com/Bugbitz, https://crankphlegm.wixsite.com/bugbitz. Dave Wheatley or 'Caddy' as he's known is a really good guy – I've had a few engines go through his workshop. He rebuilt the 1835cc engine in my GT Beetle and has rebuilt to 100% stock, the original 1200cc engine in my '65 Beetle 'Landfill' that we featured in the magazine. That engine hadn't been fired up in 17 years but after Caddy's rebuild, it powered the Beetle from Ireland, on into Wales and on to The VolksWorld Show. It drove there and back covering nearly 1,000 miles without a hitch – Cathal O'Toole

Karmann Ghia
OWNERS C
EOG 176K
KARMANN Ghia
OWNERS CLUB (G.B.)

Ghia up in April

The Ghia Owners Club (GB) is holding its AGM / show & shine competition at The British Motor Museum, Gaydon this 15 April. The event is open to all Karmann Ghias from mild to wild, and best of all you do not need to be a member to attend! The joining fee is being waived on the day too.

Latest Stuff

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From: www.justkampers.com
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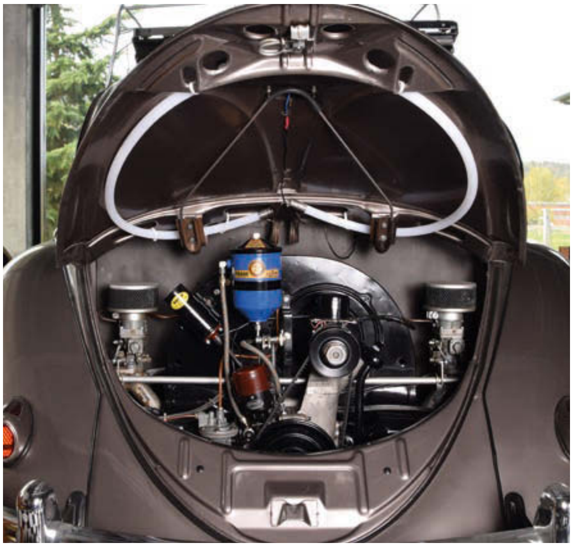


Still Doin' It

As I write this piece I'm fresh back from the Freddy Files gathering at Ninove in Belgium (see pages 70-74) and have just finished working out the final car positions for The *VolksWorld* Show at Sandown Park… exciting times, indeed. But, this also means that the 2018 show season is here – woohoo!

A POD RACEWAY

I've been pining for the return of the summer show season and, now it's here, I plan to make the most of it by attending as many VW events as possible. This includes a few trips to mainland Europe, some family-orientated camping weekenders, the occasional day event and a handful of race meetings, too. And, speaking of race meetings, there's good and bad news on this front. The bad news is that Shakespeare County Raceway will be gone soon enough, as the site is now due to become a housing estate. However, the good news is that Santa Pod Raceway has really stepped things up for 2018 by removing the entire track surface and overhauling the legendary quarter mile over the winter months. With the base levelled, the strip was re-laid in concrete, which has been carefully finished in order to make this one of the flattest (and fastest) drag track surfaces in Europe. That's right, the new concrete surface should speed things up a touch, and several racers I've spoken to so far have mentioned that they're hoping for big things at Santa Pod this year.

So, we have Big Bang, Bug Jam and VW Action all hosted at Santa Pod this summer, plus the VWDRC and Outlaw Flat 4 racers will be in attendance throughout the season, hence there's plenty of opportunities to check it out and support VW drag racing this year. I'm certainly hoping to see more European VWs heading over to try out the new surface – I think this could really be a good boost for the VW racing scene (and Santa Pod Raceway, of course).

If you typically only attend field-based camping events and have never been to a race meeting, you've been missing out. Even if you're not particularly a fan of speed, racing or motorsport, it's something I'd recommend, if only to experience the noise, excitement and general assault on the senses that is a key part of being a spectator at a drag meeting.

Likewise, if you're a festival fan and always head straight for the dance tent, why not mix it up a bit and enjoy a relaxed weekender for a change? Check out some fresh options this year.

Small shows, big shows, race meetings, vintage concours events, chilled weekenders… they're all different, yet they all have one thing in common – they are all VW meetings. And hey, why not take a step outside your comfort zone and check out a water-cooled meeting… or have I crossed the line now?

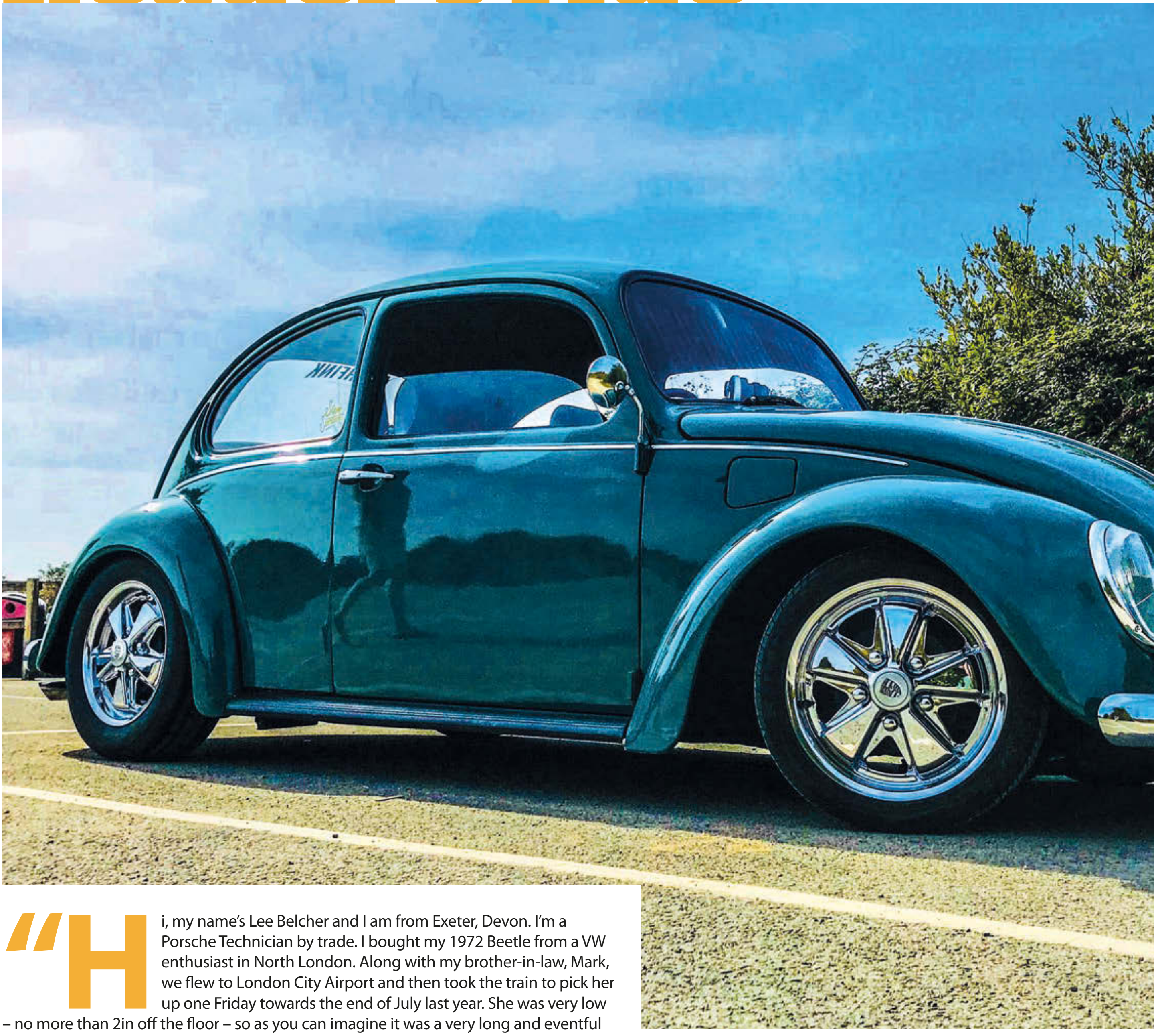
Paul Knight

www.volksworldshows.com

What do you think?

Got something to say? Drop me a line at paul.knight@kelseymedia.co.uk

Reader's ride



"Hi, my name's Lee Belcher and I am from Exeter, Devon. I'm a Porsche Technician by trade. I bought my 1972 Beetle from a VW enthusiast in North London. Along with my brother-in-law, Mark, we flew to London City Airport and then took the train to pick her up one Friday towards the end of July last year. She was very low – no more than 2in off the floor – so as you can imagine it was a very long and eventful drive home to Devon along the M4 in torrential rain!

The first job was to raise the suspension – she was too low to deal with Devon's roads. It now features a Limebug 4in narrowed beam with sawtooth skid plate and a Limebug air ride kit that came with the car. I raised the rear a little and fitted Limebug shocks.

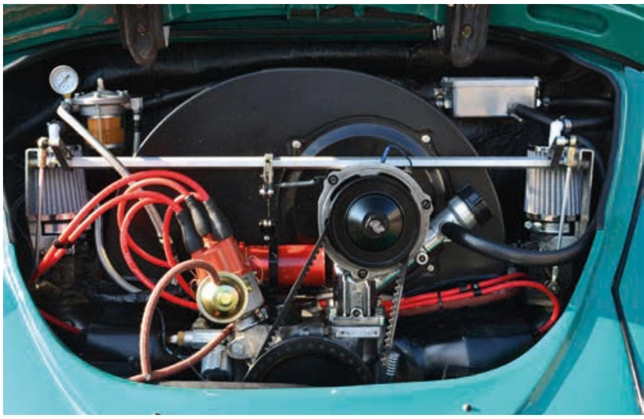
The engine is a 1641cc with twin Weber ICTs, Engle 110 camshaft and stainless steel sidewinder headers with a sidewinder silencer to finish things off. The wheels are Flat 4 Porsche Fuchs. Oh, and I've fitted earlier style wings and bonnet and an eyebrow style decklid combined with a standoff kit for that open decklid look which I love.

I also fitted an EMPI breather box/system to the engine, replaced all the fuel lines with braided hoses and fitted a fuel pressure regulator just to keep things in check.

The US highback seats were reupholstered in fat biscuit leather by Bernard Newbury and I am told by the previous owner that it was one of his last jobs before retiring. I have also added a Retro-Sounds Radio with a custom-built parcel shelf – thanks Mark.

That's about it so far. Next on the 'to do' list is a full re-wire, window regulators, tidying up the front tub and a bit more on the paint work.

Meanwhile, I'll be out at some local VW shows – and I'm looking forward to cruising the Devon coast."



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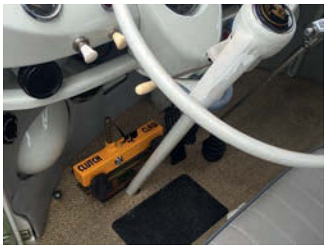

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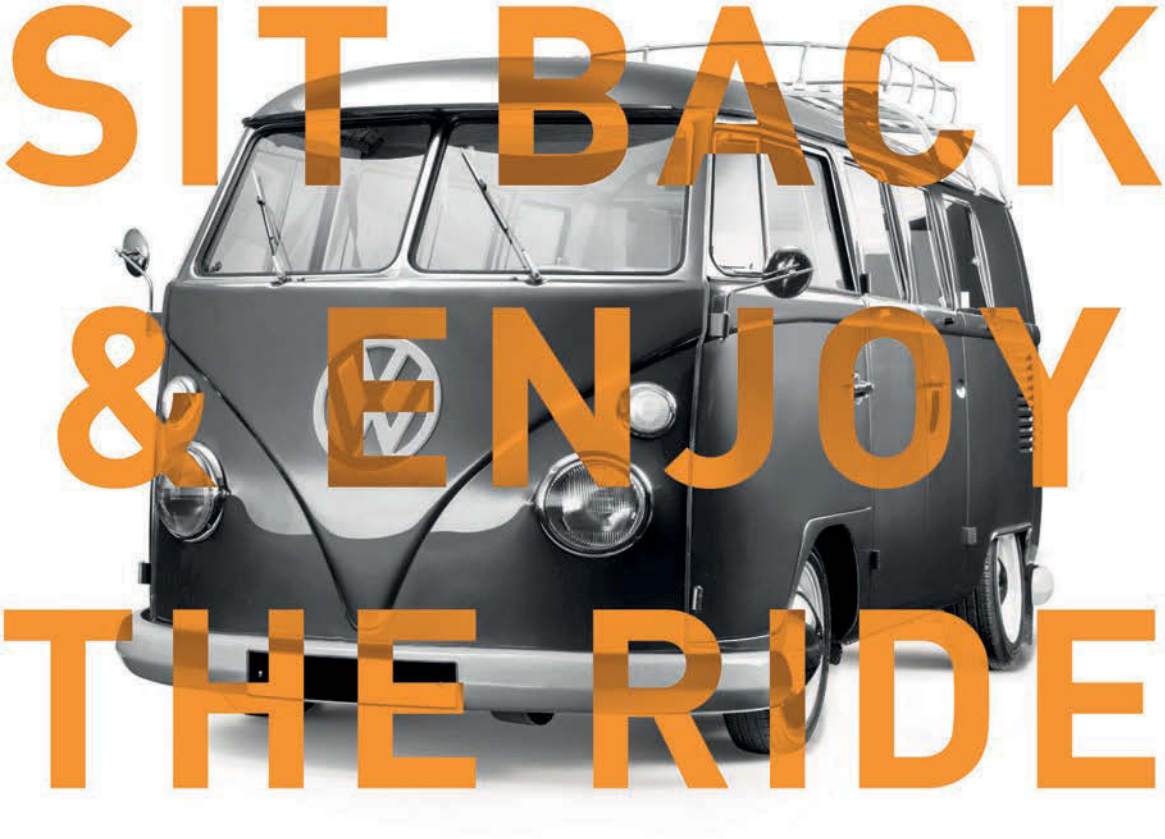

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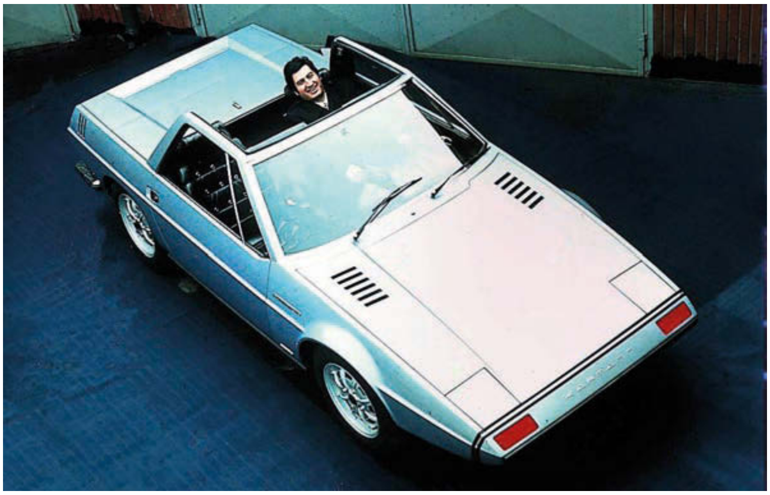
You Cheetah!

The Karmann Cheetah was a little-known and slightly bizarre budget Volkswagen designed by Giorgetto Giugiaro, before he got around to his more famous VW creations. It remained just a one-off show special, although Fiat at least seemed to appreciate the idea…

Words
Richard Gunn



Giorgetto Giugiaro is rightly regarded as one of the greatest vehicle stylists of all time. The Italian automotive artist, named the car designer of the century in 1999, has been responsible for hundreds of production, prototype and show models since his career began in 1955. These have included some of the most exotic and desirable machines ever created, such as the Maserati Ghibli, Lotus Esprit, DeLorean DMC-12 and, um, the original Fiat Panda. And, of course, his path intersected that of Volkswagen's during the 1970s when he came up with one of his more applauded creations, the MkI Golf, as well as the Passat, Scirocco and Jetta. So, arguably, we can pin some of the blame for the European death of the Beetle on his talents. Under the circumstances though, we'll let him off. Ironically, the Volkswagen Audi Group now owns Italdesign, the company that Giugiaro founded in 1968, acquiring 90 per cent of its shares in the summer of 2010. Giugiaro stayed on for a while but departed rather abruptly in 2015 and sold the rest of his shares. Future Volkswagen boss Ferdinand Piëch also worked briefly at Italdesign during summer 1972, to learn its trade before going off to become the manager of technological engineering at Audi.

^ Giorgetto Giugiaro looking rather pleased with the Cheetah he's just created

> “if you want to experience what a production Cheetah might have been like, buy an old X1/9 and shoehorn a VW air-cooled engine in the back”

> The inside of the Cheetah wasn't terribly luxurious, aside from the buttoned-down leather seats. Heater controls and gearstick betray the Beetle underpinnings

All show, no go

However, Giugiaro's flirtations with Volkswagen stretch back even earlier than the Golf and co. They're just much less famous. Back in the late 1960s, when employed by Ghia, he created a Type 3-based fastback hatch coupe which was sold in Brazil from 1970 as the Karmann Ghia TC. It wasn't one of his more memorable pieces of work though.

Then, in 1971, came the Volkswagen Karmann Cheetah. The what? Well, you can be forgiven for not recognising the name – or thinking it was a 1980s Volkswagen motorhome – as the Cheetah was a single concept car for the March 1971 Geneva Motor Show. And we'll also forgive you for thinking how much it looks like a Fiat X1/9… because it does. Totally. Especially from the front. Even though the X1/9 didn't appear until the following year (but was admittedly based on a 1969 concept car by Bertone's Marcello Gandini – so who influenced who?). However, under the Cheetah's wedge-shaped wonderfulness lurked pure rear-engined Volkswagen Beetle 1600 rather than a mid-mounted small Fiat overhead-cam engine.

Display purposes only

The thinking behind the Cheetah – other than to wow (or possibly challenge) Swiss motor show crowds – was to come up with a budget open top sports car that could

Of course, the flat rear engine cover was perfect for posing on to prove you'd successfully escaped from jail…

Would the Cheetah have worked as a real world roadster?

It was from the front that the Cheetah looked most like a Fiat X1/9

In side profile, the Karmann Cheetah did look unfortunately like a small and sporty pick-up truck

Rather than a VW badge up front, the Cheetah trumpeted its Karmann builder instead

The large rear deck was necessary to accommodate both the hood and the engine. The rear Volkswagen script was the only VW reference on the car

be easily mass-produced. An accompanying Karmann press release referred to it as an 'economic roadster.' Therefore, what was underneath all its pointy Italian angles was simply the slightly modified floorpan of a US-spec VW Beetle with a 1584cc engine, giving the usual blistering 50bhp. There was little else done, for all the car had to do was pose on show stands and appear in some typically 1970s cheesy promotional photos. If the decision had been taken to put the Cheetah into production, the hard work refining the underpinnings could be done then. After all, it wasn't like Volkswagen and Karmann didn't have a pretty successful track record of putting new al fresco bodies on Beetle bases…

So all the effort went into what was on top instead. Giugiaro at this time was becoming celebrated for his very angular and straight-lined designs, with the Cheetah following on from his similarly crisp Porsche Tapiro (based on the VW-Porsche 914/916) and Alfa Romeo Alfasud Caimano. All three were so razor-sharp that you could probably have done yourself a nasty injury squeezing past them. The Cheetah's striking style, with its almost de rigueur pop-up headlamps, was certainly eye-catching. Even if the need to accommodate a Beetle engine and a stowed hood out back did give it something of a sporty pick-up appearance, making it look a little unbalanced.

Top down thinking

While Karmann's responsibility was mainly in building what Giugiaro dreamt up, it did have a hand in one element of the design. That was the roof – a soft-top that contained a translucent sunroof panel and could be completely rolled back so it left the back of the cabin totally open.

Very few concept cars make it through to being production models, and the Cheetah was yet another that failed to make the jump. The reasons? Well, the main one was probably that it was too similar in concept to the VW-Porsche 914, which had only been introduced a couple of years before the Cheetah's birth. The Karmann would have been a direct rival if it had been produced. Giugiaro had also been collaborating with both Volkswagen and Karmann since 1969 on what would become the Scirocco, so all parties knew that the air-cooled era, at least in Europe, was drawing to a close. The Cheetah's looks may have been a little too radical for Volkswagen, which was still struggling to find its way following the death of its visionary boss Heinrich Nordhoff in 1968. It had also been stung by the criticism of the Type 34 Karmann Ghia and Type 411, both of which had somewhat 'love-it-or-hate-it' styling. With the new water-cooled K70 not doing quite as well as might have been hoped, was there room in the VW catalogue for another contentious car that might have divided opinion?

So, ultimately, the Karmann Cheetah remained just an intriguing one-off; a concept that went nowhere except preservation as a museum piece. Giugiaro graduated to even more wedgy stuff for other marques, alongside his more toned-down VW work, and Karmann re-used the Cheetah name for a T25 box on wheels. It was left to Fiat to do something mainstream with the basic shape of the Cheetah, launching the X1/9 in 1972 and seeing it sell around 160,000 before it was dropped in 1989.

Still, if you want to experience what a production Cheetah might have been like, buy an old X1/9 and shoehorn a VW air-cooled engine in the back. And then let us know how you get on. Once you're out of hospital… ■

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Now for something completely different…

Not content with a simple rebuild, taxi driver Jez Cane from Hampshire went the whole hog and created this inspired homage to his teenage dream Bug from the late '80s

Words and photos Simon Cooke

South Coast Vehicle Restoration

ENDURO 725
RUNWAY
205/70R15

TECH INFO

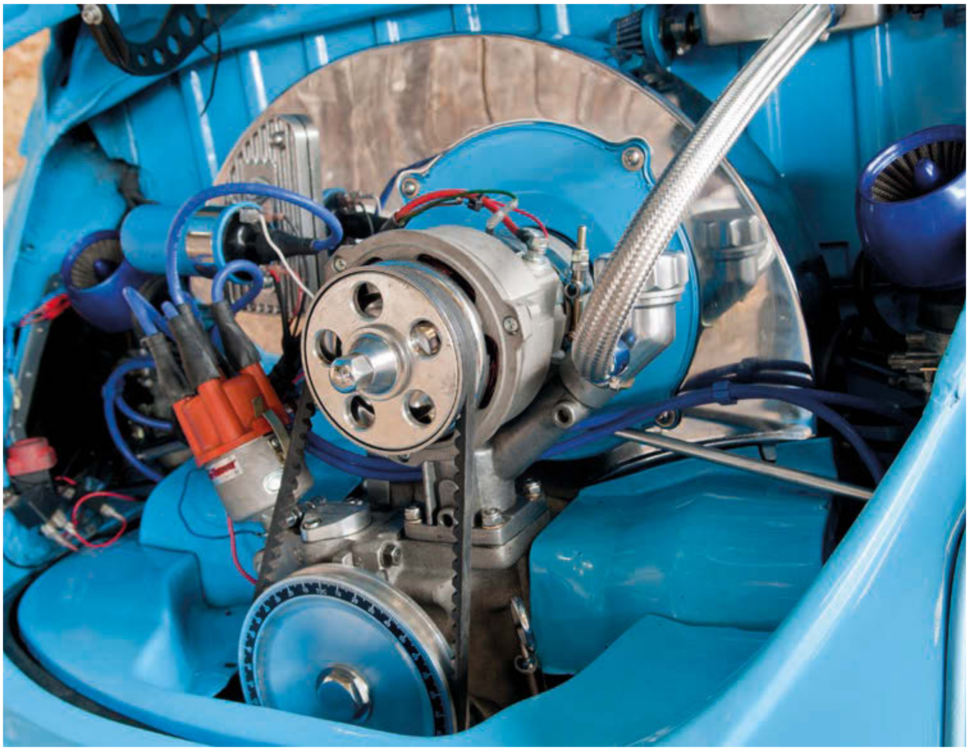
ENGINE

1776cc Autolinea case machined for AA 90.5 pistons and barrels; Scat Pro Street heads; CB Performance eight dowel crank; Engle 110 cam; Scat conrods; chromoly pushrods; CB Performance pushrod tubes; aluminium bolt on rocker covers; 1.25 ratio rockers; Schadek 26mm oil pump; CB Performance oil pump cover; Pertronix Flamethrower distributor with Ignitor electronic ignition; twin Weber 34 ICT carbs with Scat linkage; Fram external oil filter; Scat chrome fan shroud; painted tinware; CB Performance coil bracket; lightened flywheel; heavy-duty race fan; billet crank pulley; chrome alternator pulley and cover; stainless steel braided hoses; Bugpack oil breather; Empi quiet pack exhaust system

SUSPENSION / BRAKES

Front discs and rear drums in Porsche 5 stud pattern; dropped spindles

^ Deleted sills makes Jez's Bug just a bit different



> Original 1198cc unit's been replaced by a trick 1776cc lump. Check out those weird dirt bike carb air cleaners…

“I was out to buy a runner with an MoT, something I could just drive as it was”

Blame it on a single rusty panel. That’s all the new owner of this Beetle was planning to replace before he used it on the road. However, as Jez Cane explained: “It just all snowballed from there.” And some £13,000 later, this is the end result…

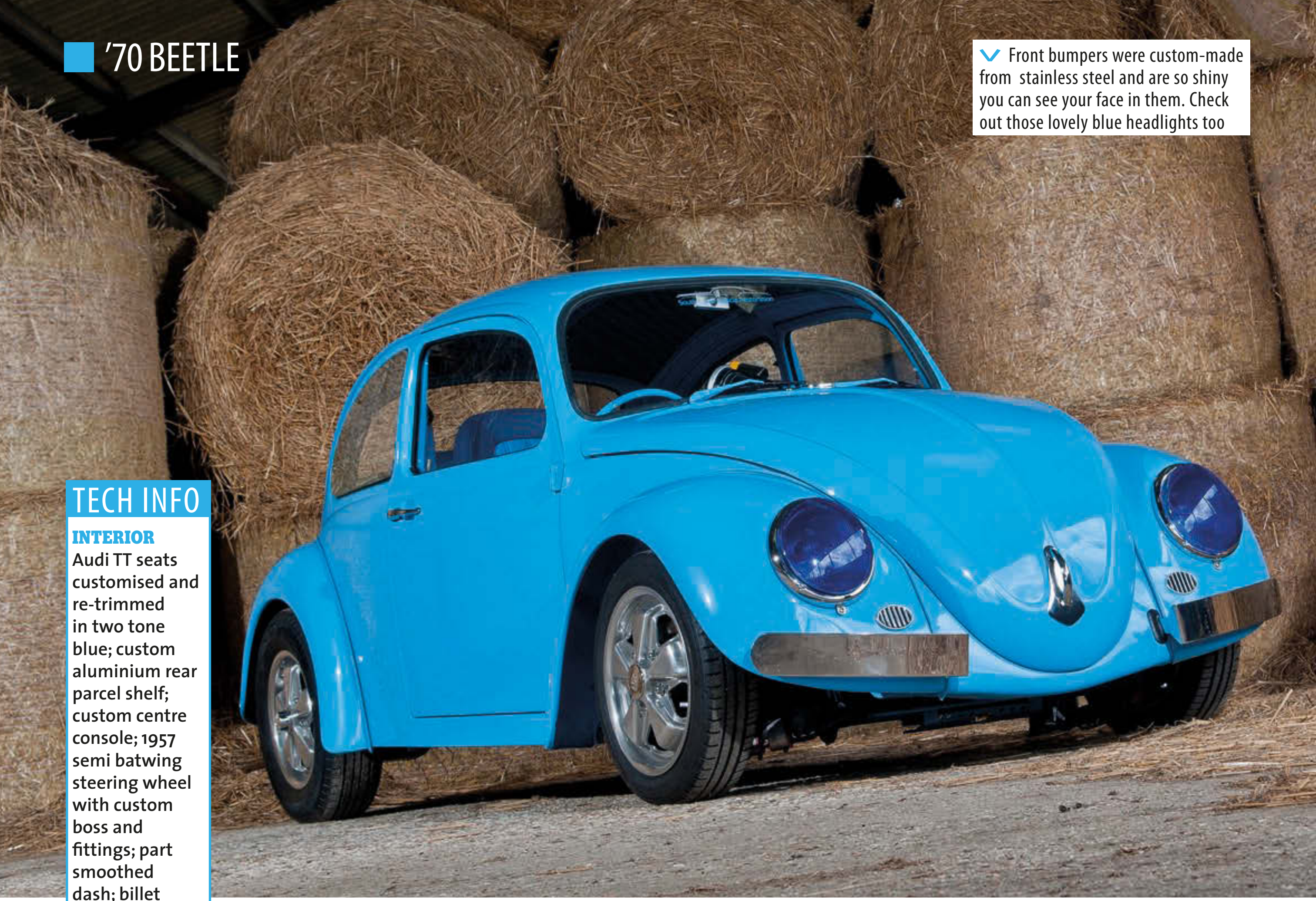
But let’s rewind the story for a minute to get some background on Jez and his love of Beetles, this being his fourth. He bought his first Bug when he was 19. “I thought Beetles looked cool,” he remembers. “Back in the ’80s the Beetle scene was just taking off, I went to Bug Jam in 1989 and that was the show that really inspired me.”

His previous Beetle was another 1970 version, complete with aircon, which he owned while living in Thailand. He once used it as a removal van for an 11-hour overnight drive while moving house, only stopping for toilet / fuel breaks and when it started to overheat, which was quite often despite the lower night time temperatures.

Then, when Jez returned to the UK in 2014, he decided he needed another Beetle. “Initially my budget was as little as possible; in other words, I was out to buy a runner with an MoT, something I could just drive as it was,” he points out. “I found a car for £2500 and all it really needed was a replacement for the rusty front

>

Alloys are 15in Porsche Fuchs replicas – 5.5in wide on the front, 4.5 on the rear



Front bumpers were custom-made from stainless steel and are so shiny you can see your face in them. Check out those lovely blue headlights too

TECH INFO

INTERIOR
Audi TT seats customised and re-trimmed in two tone blue; custom aluminium rear parcel shelf; custom centre console; 1957 semi batwing steering wheel with custom boss and fittings; part smoothed dash; billet aluminium switches; Autometer monster tach; Autometer oil temp gauge; Flat 4 shifter with billet aluminium knob; custom two-tone blue front and rear door and quarter panels with Mazda MX5 aluminium kick panels; aluminium rear view mirror; two-tone blue custom headliner; blue Perspex rear kick panels; JBL amp, subwoofer and two 6x9 speakers with a JVC head unit

WHEELS & TYRES
SSP Porsche Fuchs replicas 5.5 x 15in on the front, 4.5 x 15in on the rear with 205/70/15 and 145/65 tyres

quarter panel, the rest was solid," he continued. But somehow he knew he wouldn't be keeping it standard; it already had sloping headlights and smaller bumpers to make it look like an older car, but this was just the start.

After having the rusty panel replaced he decided the bonnet wasn't a good fit, so replaced that, and then he realised he didn't like the state of the sills… are you starting to get the picture?

In the end, all the changes added up to what you see before you here – inspired by the famous BillaBug that he'd loved since seeing it at Bug Jam all those years ago.

Lucky steer

All the bodywork was carried out at the same time so Dave at Hell Bent Hot Rods in Hampshire was able to build the new engine while the 'shell was being stripped, modified and painted and Jez was busy sourcing a new interior.

"I found some Audi TT seats for £150 which I thought would look perfect," says Jez. "They were narrow enough to fit in the car and, in fact, in the rear we had to fabricate spacers to make them wider." Of course he then had them trimmed when Dave had fabricated suitable frames/mounts. Aside from the seat trimming ACC Avon Campervan Conversion were also responsible for the other interior trim, including the new headlining.

Originally the car was a dark blue and he was looking for something similar, but the first paint job was a total hash – an expensive mistake.

However, he was then steered in the direction of the boys at South Coast Vehicle Restoration in Sway, who made a much better fist of things, spraying it in this 2007-2010 British Gas blue.

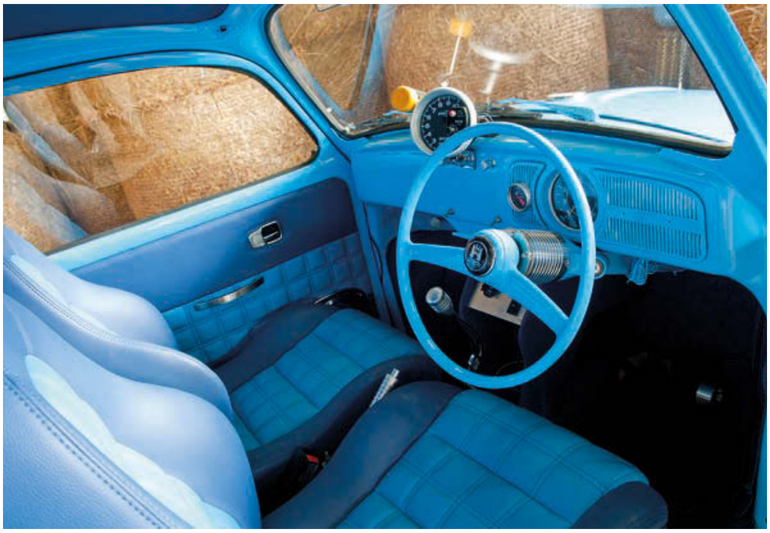
The new engine (and just check out the full spec in the technical panel) was built from scratch with the old one being sold on to help fund the process. "I'd basically done a lot of research into my options and the 1776cc spec gives you good power and is a strong engine," explained Jez. "I wanted it for cruising around and the odd run down the drag strip. The car now revs to 6000rpm and although it's not yet been on a dyno it should be good for about 100bhp." And that extra power is his reason for that in-yer-face rev counter on the smoothed, colour-coded and glovebox-less dashboard.

> **"I found some Audi TT seats for £150 which I thought would look perfect"**

Inspired moments

With the car painted, it was a case of assembling all the various other parts of the jigsaw. "I started putting the car back together myself once it had all been painted and although most of it is just easy bolt on stuff, it still took me a long time to finish," he admitted. "He should have been hiring storage space off me by the hour," adds Alec the boss at SCVR, "I'd have made a fortune from him!"

There are a couple of different modifications, such as the fish tank windscreen washer bottle, which you'll

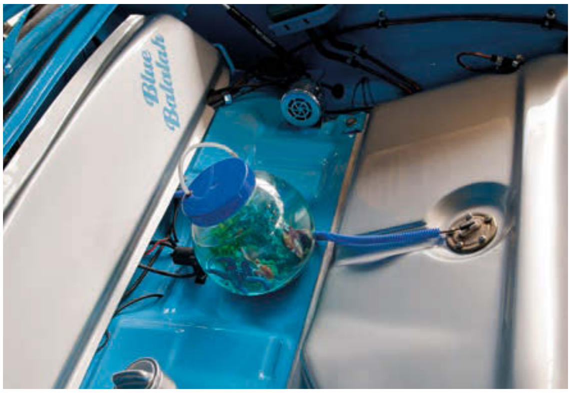


Smoothed dash is a definite nod towards Cal Look, although that half banjo wheel breaks the mould

Flat 4 shifter and billet aluminium gearknob make every gear change a joy. Except maybe on cold days. Centre console features switches for electric windows (yes, really) and top drawer audio setup

Monster Autometer rev counter dominates the virtually all-blue interior

Not your standard Beetle seats – these ones came via an Audi TT and were trimmed in blue leather to match the exterior



A fish tank? Well, what else would work as well for a washer bottle?

THE BUILD

This is how it started out, as a humble 1200 Standard – albeit with domed hubcaps and sloping lamps to make it look older than it really was

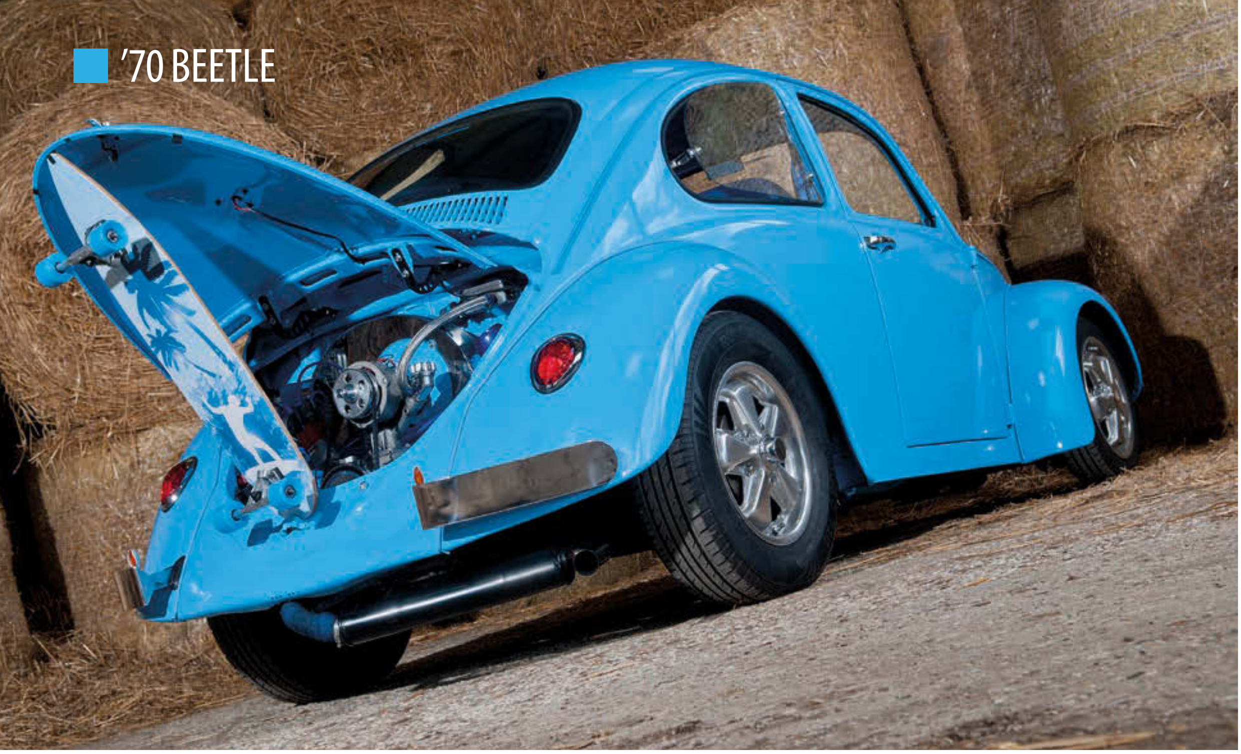
The body was remarkably solid but needed quite a bit of preparation before it could be painted

Jez bought a set of Audi TT seats for £150 then custom made the runners to make them fit

South Coast Vehicle Restoration in Hampshire did the respray in British Gas blue

Dave Rossiter at Hell Bent Hot Rods was responsible for the engine, which now features a CB Performance eight dowel crank and Engle 110 cam

Scat heads and a host of other modifications mean this 1776cc engine's good for around 100bhp



Colour coded skateboard serves as a handy bonnet stay. Empi quiet pack exhaust fits the theme nicely

Yet more custom parts – this time in the form of a bespoke aluminium parcel shelf

TECH INFO

BODY
1970 VW Beetle Standard 1200; pre-'67 wings, bonnet and stand-off deck lid; sloping headlights with LED indicators; custom stainless steel quarter bumpers; custom fuel tank; custom windscreen washer bottle; custom bonnet release; custom painted wiring cover; de-seamed front quarter panels; smooth side sills; custom rear light clusters; one-piece electric front windows; frameless side pop-outs; de-seamed top of deck lid; stand off boot lid; smoothed exhaust cut-outs; custom wing beading; custom rear indicators; resprayed in LT5B Blue

notice in the photos that (partly) helps to explain the long build process. "That was an inspired moment; I wanted something a bit different and Dave and I came up with the same idea at the same time," explained Jez. They have also removed the spare wheel; well he's running two different wheel sizes now so carrying the one spare is only going to be useful for half his punctures!

"Quite a few people have fitted similar bumpers on Beetles over the years but I wanted to be slightly different," said Jez. "I went to Flux Fabrications in nearby Lymington with a template of exactly how I wanted them to end up like and they did a fantastic job of making a combined bumper and bracket out of stainless steel."

> **"Give me 10 minutes and I'm bound to think of something else I'll be changing"**

Incidentally, those rear lights were taken from a Yamaha Fino scooter, a model apparently only available in south East Asia. Another nod towards two-wheels comes from the carb air filters which are from a pit bike.

A bit like Beyonce

The car was eventually looking like this by April last year and Jez says that in total it cost him around £13,000 – that's a fair bit more than he planned, mainly down to having it painted twice.

That said, Jez is delighted with the end result saying it's his dream Beetle. "It feels great to drive; like making love to Beyonce on a warm summer evening," he reveals. Best not to ask how he knows that. "You know you have the right car when you turn round and look at it each time you park up and walk away," he quickly adds.

So it's totally perfect then? Well he says that maybe he'll tidy up the wiring in the engine bay, and then maybe he'll fit some stainless steel running boards.

"Give me 10 minutes and I'm bound to think of something else I'll be changing," he concludes with a grin. As most of you lot will appreciate – a project is never totally finished.

Jez got the inspiration for this car from a visit to Bug Jam back in the late '80s

Those unusual rear lights look like they're from a '30s Buick, but they're actually from a Yamaha scooter!

Thanks to: Alec at South Coast Vehicle Restoration (www.scvrestoration.co.uk), Dave at Hell Bent Hot Rods, ACC Avon Campervan Conversion, Flux Fabrication and Welding

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Slammer of '69

Michael Brückner's air-equipped Notchback is a slick and perfectly stanced ride that has taken the European show scene by storm. Paul Knight gets the low-down…

Words Paul Knight **Photos** Dokke Sahertian

CALIFORNIA
NTCHN69

CALIFORNIA
NTCHN69

Michael Brückner hails from Freigericht in Germany and is the proud owner of this awesome ’69 Notchback, which he’s owned since 1992. Of course, it didn’t always look as cool as this, but before we dive into the build, we should perhaps mention that, despite owning it for 26-years, it is not Michael’s first (or only) VW. In fact, 46 year-old Michael has owned a string of Bugs, a ’71 Ghia, a ’68 Notch and a ’69 Fasty prior to acquiring this particular ride. Michael explained: “When I sold my previous Notchback I decided I wanted another Type 3, but it had to be a nice, original car with no rust or welded patches and repairs.” He continued, “I’d been to view 16 cars prior to finding this one, which belonged to the original owner – an older lady who had never driven it in the rain.” It’s a 1600L model and, being a ’69, it’s one of the last of the ‘early’ (short-nose) cars. Conveniently, these combine the classic style of the early Type 3s with later luxuries such as 12-volt electrics, IRS rear suspension and front disc brakes. In other words, they look cool and are great to drive.

Back to the future

Michael lowered the car and had a friend repaint one door and two wings (to repair minor car parking dents etc), but describes it as “80% original paint with zero welding,” which is pretty impressive given the reputation these cars have for rust issues.

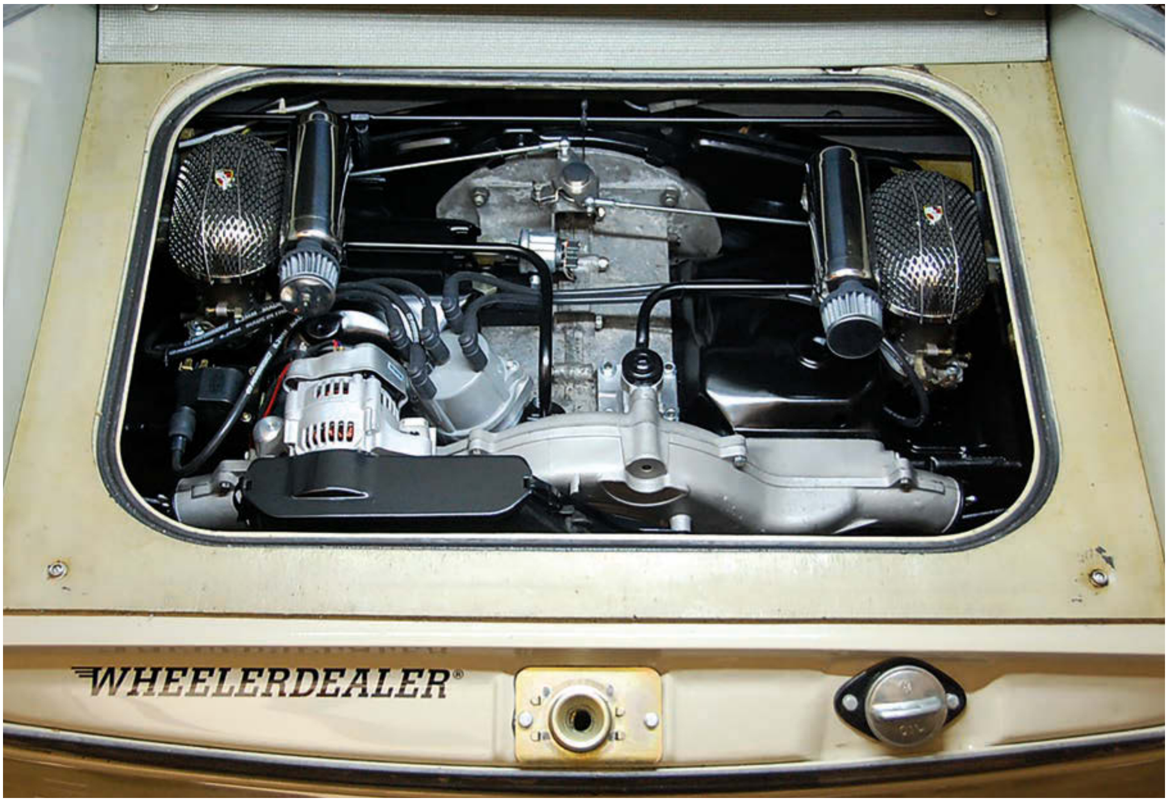
Said Michael: “I drove it for a few years but it was eventually parked up as my life became busy due to a house purchase and the whole family thing.” In fact, the car didn’t move for 13 years, and it was only when Michael decided he might sell it to fund the purchase of a Ford Falcon station wagon that it was finally dragged out of the garage. But, as Michael began to look around the Notch, he realised just how nice it was and soon concluded that he was too attached to the car to let it go. After all, he was only the second owner of this 60,000km Type 3, and he knew he’d never find another one as nice as this if he regretted the sale.

A whole new world

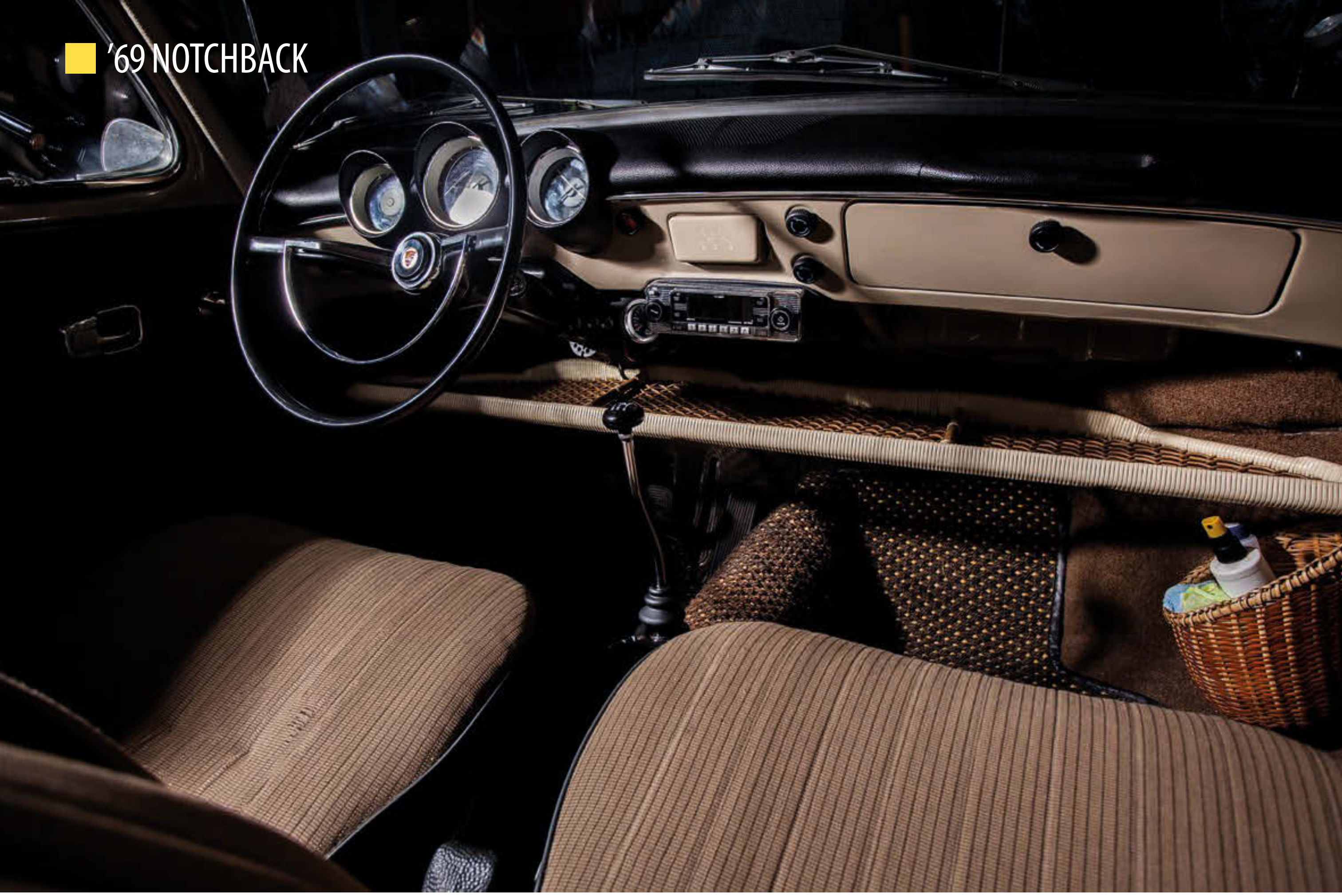
And so a plan was hatched to give the car a fresh new look, which involved the assistance of Emanuel Jeckel at Airthed. Michael explained, “Getting the IRS rear end to work with air ride involved some head-scratching and fabrication, but once we had built the mounts for the Ridetech air shocks and fitted up Porsche torsion bars and adjustable spring plates I was finally happy with the rear end drop.”

“it had to be a nice, original car with no rust or welded patches and repairs”

At the front, the original Type 3 beam was replaced with a narrowed and adjustable Type 1 beam conversion kit. Monroe air shocks are fitted via relocated damper mounts, which means the car now lifts quickly and rides really well. Under the bonnet is a high-pressure Viair 400 compressor, an air tank and an Accuair VU4 four-corner solenoid valve block, which provides a fast flow rate so the car lifts and drops in an instant. Incidentally, Michael has fitted a pressure

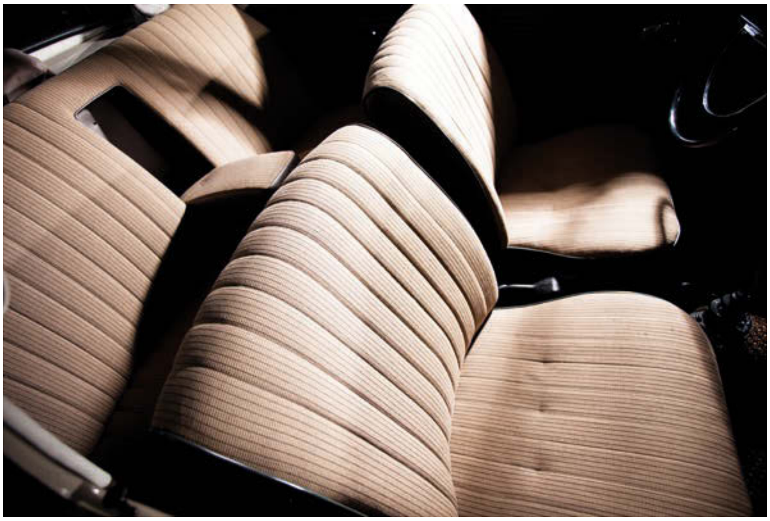


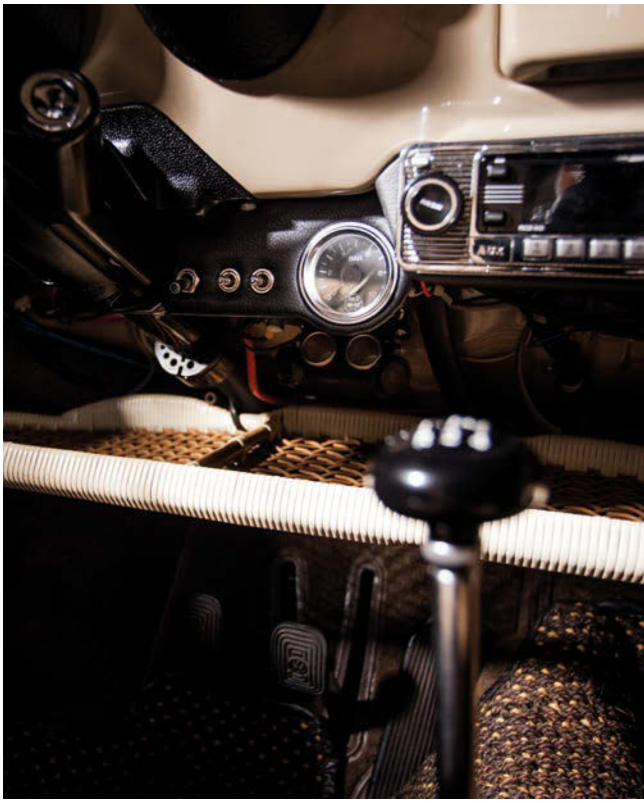
This is the new engine, fresh installed, and it’s guaranteed to provide Michael with all the extra grunt he wanted



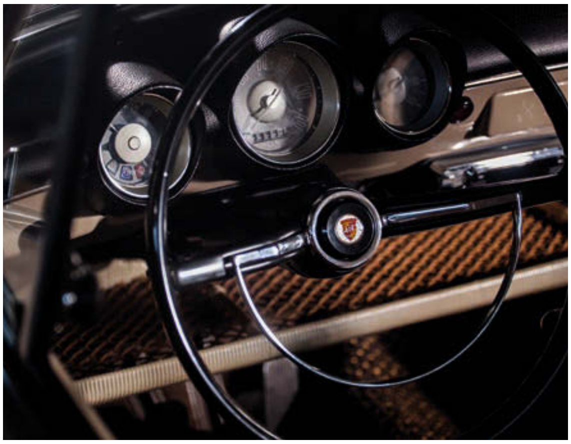
< ^ Interior trim is in great condition… even the carpets are the originals. Michael has added a Vintage Speed shifter, coco mats and a Bambus parcel shelf

v The air-ride is controlled via this neat switch panel, which is tucked nicely beneath the dashboard

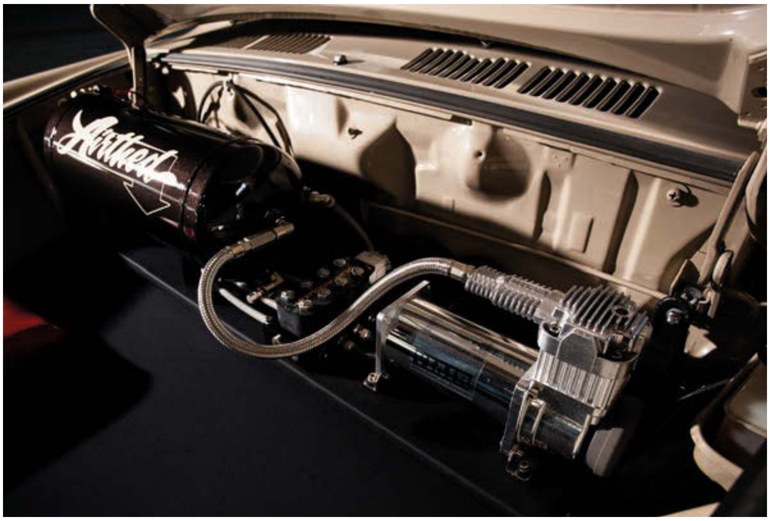




> Michael made a Porsche-inspired horn push, which is fitted to the original steering wheel



Under the bonnet is a Viair 400 compressor, an air tank and an Accuair VU4 four-corner solenoid valve block



gauge and the control switches in a discreet panel beneath the dashboard, which is easily accessible when driving should he need to quickly raise the car to tackle speed humps or drop it to the floor whilst out cruising.

Regarding wheel choice, Michael had a clear idea of what he wanted. "I love the classic Porsche Fuchs look but I didn't want to fit the same old replica rims seen on so many VWs these days, hence I sourced a set of original 16in Fuchs, which I had polished and detailed in gloss black." The fronts are 6in wide (ET36) and are fitted with 165/50R16 tyres while the rears are 7in (ET23.3) and wear 185/55R16 treads.

Time to tidy things up

Inside the car, Michael added a set of coco floor mats, a Bambus parcel shelf, a Vintage Speed shifter and a neat ISP West tachometer, which replaces the original clock in the dash pod. There's also a USB-ready, retro-styled radio, which is hooked up to a subwoofer beneath the rear seat and a pair of Clarion speakers in custom-made speaker ports on the rear shelf.

Outside, Michael added a set of Flat4 bumper overriders, clear front indicator lenses and flat, US-spec (all red) rear light lenses to the otherwise stock bodywork. The end result is, as you can see, simply stunning, and has resulted in a number of trophies (including best Type 3 at Le Bug Show, Spa).

> "Getting the IRS rear end to work with air ride involved some head-scratching..."

Motoring on

Michael is keen to hit more events in 2018, hence he has decided to build a more powerful motor for his Notchback, which should help eat up the miles on the Autobahn, whilst also making the car a lot more fun around town. He's opted for a torquey 1904cc combination, which is currently being assembled by Tom Gotta at WheelerDealer and will be fitted by the time you read this feature.

The motor is based around a Type 3 'case, which has been overhauled and machined

Note the Italian-spec clear indicator lenses plus the Flat4 bumper overriders

CALIFO
NTCH

TECH INFO

BODY
1969 1600L Type 3 Notchback (early 'short-nose' body)with 80% original Savannah Beige paint (two repainted wings and a door) and no welding to the body or chassis

ENGINE
Originally a 1600cc twin-port but has just been fitted with a 1904cc pancake Type 3 motor with 40IDF carburettors on short manifolds and a custom stainless steel silencer on a CSP Python header; Engle W120 camshaft; ported 044 heads and 9.5:1 compression ratio

INTERIOR
Mostly original; coco floor mats; Bambus parcel shelf; Vintage Speed shifter; ISP West tachometer; modern sound system

WHEELS & TYRES
Genuine 16in Porsche Fuchs which have been fully polished and detailed in gloss black; fronts 6in wide (ET36) with 165/50R16 tyres, 7in (ET23.3) and wear 185/55R16 treads at the rear

SUSPENSION
Air ride by Airthed based around a high-pressure Viair 400 compressor, an air tank and an Accuair VU4 four-corner solenoid valve block; narrowed Type 1 front beam with Monroe air dampers; modified IRS system at rear with Ridetech air shocks; Porsche torsion bars; adjustable spring plates

to accept 90.5mm barrels and pistons (and case-savers). Tom chose a chromoly 74mm stroke crankshaft for this build, which required minimal clearancing of the crankcase internals. Incidentally, the case has been stress relieved by hand finishing and smoothing sharp edges around the machined areas and removing excess casting flashing etc.

The 8-dowel crankshaft is fitted with a 12lb flywheel and Scat I-beam rods, which have been dynamically balanced along with the pistons. Michael and Tom discussed various options and concluded that an Engle W120 camshaft (fitted with Empi straight-cut, steel gears) would provide the ideal mix of driveability, power and reliability. Manton pushrods and Scat 1.25:1 ratio rockers operate 40mm inlet and 35.5mm exhaust valves in the hand-ported 044 cylinder heads, which have been set up to achieve a compression ratio of 9.5:1.

> "an Engle W120 camshaft would provide the ideal mix of driveability, power and reliability"

Given the limited ground clearance when the ride-height is dropped, Tom opted for a slimline aluminium sump to ensure that the Schadek oil pump should never run dry.

A T25 (waterboxer) ignition system provides the spark for the air/fuel mixture, which is supplied via a pair of Weber 40IDF carburettors. Incidentally, fitting the downdraught IDFs beneath the engine lid of this Type 3 required the use of 'shorty' manifolds and low-profile air filters, too.

The finishing touch is a CSP Python header, which is fitted with a one-off stainless steel silencer that tucks nicely beneath the rear of the car. This looks great, provides plenty of ground clearance and flows well enough to result in a power output of in the region of 125hp.

Keep an eye out for Michael's superb Notch at a show this summer – and don't forget to tell him where you read about it! ■

VW-1600-L
CALIFORNIA
NTCHN69

Flat US-spec (all red) tail light lenses are cool, as are the Hella reversing lamps on the rear bumper

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Scrape, rattle and roll

Many *VolksWorld* readers will be familiar with Der Autobahn Scrapers, a Belgian club founded over 25 years ago, which was instrumental in spreading the California Look throughout Europe. Here are two of the latest project cars to join their ranks

Words and photos Stephan Szantai

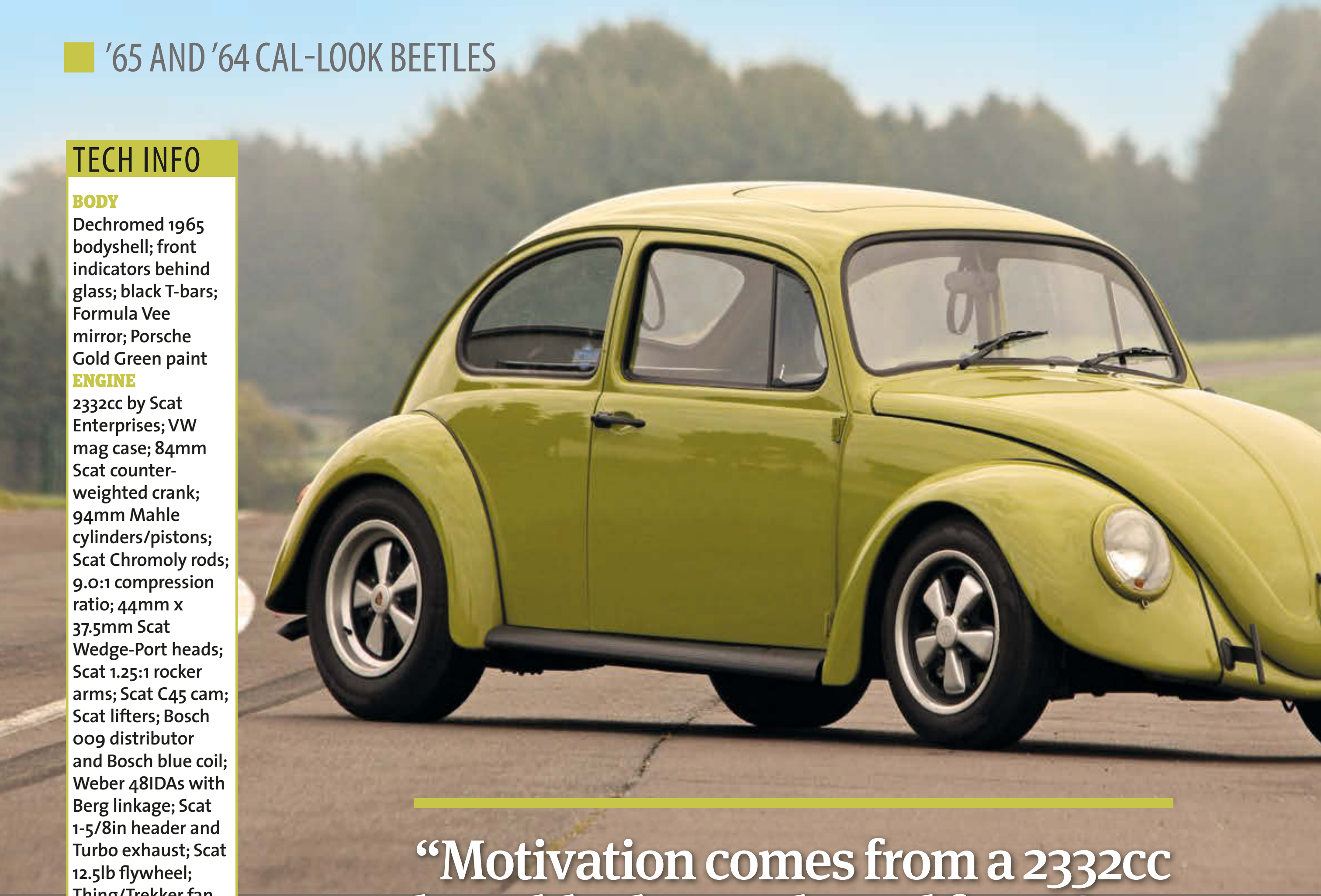
It all started in 1992 when a small group of friends with a common interest in low-to-the-ground Volkswagens decided to form a club – and so was born Der Autobahn Scrapers. And it wasn't long before the 'Scrapers' showed an interest in the California Look. Their rides soon saw their rear suspension get back to factory-stock height, while engines gained some gusto. Over the following years, they went on to become esteemed representatives of the style in Europe, thanks to their highly-detailed and powerful VWs. They've since appeared on several occasions at The *VolksWorld* Show, as well as dragstrips such as Santa Pod, of course.

> “all along, he felt the urge to build a Cal Looker”

The club remains a key player on the scene, as witnessed by their annual DAS Drag Day. Due to the closure of the beloved Bitburg Motorpark, last year's event saw the use of a new quarter-mile track with 150 racers travelling from all over Europe to try their best on the fresh dragstrip and being the Club's 25th anniversary, *VolksWorld* went along to photograph two of their finest rides.

Both have many traits in common, starting with their styling being influenced by the early days of the Cal Look from the mid- to late-'70s.

Both vehicles were also built by good friends, Ben Ooms and David Baland who helped and motivated each other to bring their respective cars to the next level.



TECH INFO

BODY
Dechromed 1965 bodyshell; front indicators behind glass; black T-bars; Formula Vee mirror; Porsche Gold Green paint

ENGINE
2332cc by Scat Enterprises; VW mag case; 84mm Scat counter-weighted crank; 94mm Mahle cylinders/pistons; Scat Chromoly rods; 9.0:1 compression ratio; 44mm x 37.5mm Scat Wedge-Port heads; Scat 1.25:1 rocker arms; Scat C45 cam; Scat lifters; Bosch 009 distributor and Bosch blue coil; Weber 48IDAs with Berg linkage; Scat 1-5/8in header and Turbo exhaust; Scat 12.5lb flywheel; Thing/Trekker fan shroud with Type 4 cooler; full-flow system with Schadek pump; Berg crank pulley

GEARBOX
Stock 4-speed; 3.88 ring and pinion

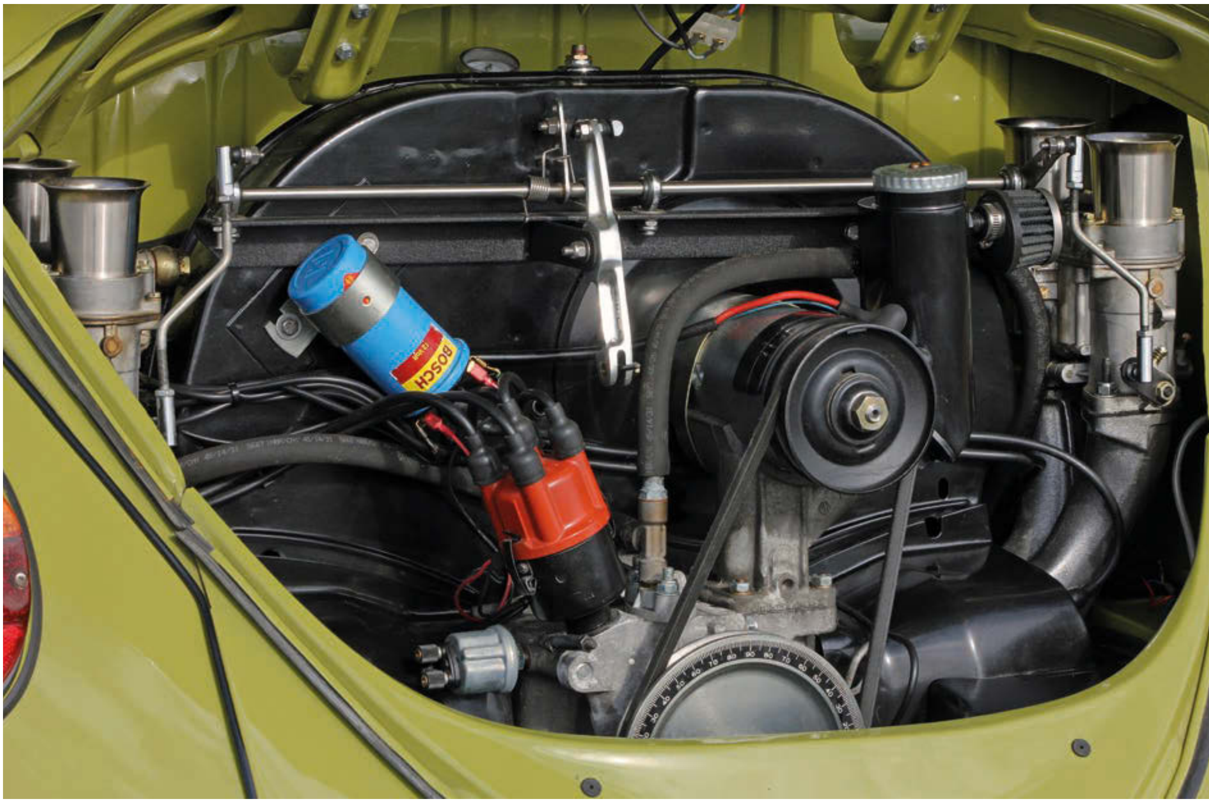
SUSPENSION
Original 1965 'pan; adjustable Type 1 beam narrowed 3in; CB Performance dropped spindles; stock shocks in front; KYB shocks at the rear

WHEELS & TYRES
6Jx15 & 7Jx15 Porsche rims; Firestone 145/15 and Vredestein 185/15 tyres

BRAKES
CB disc brakes at the front; rebuilt Type 3 drums at the rear

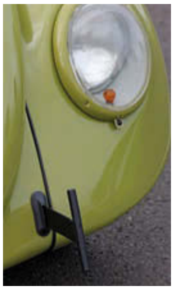
INTERIOR
Five VDO gauges; Paddy Hopkirk front seats; Simpson seat belts; TMI side panels; Springalex steering wheel; Berg shifter

> "Motivation comes from a 2332cc long-block, purchased from Scat Enterprises in California"



Ben based his project car on a '65 model, fitted with a factory sunroof, a desirable option

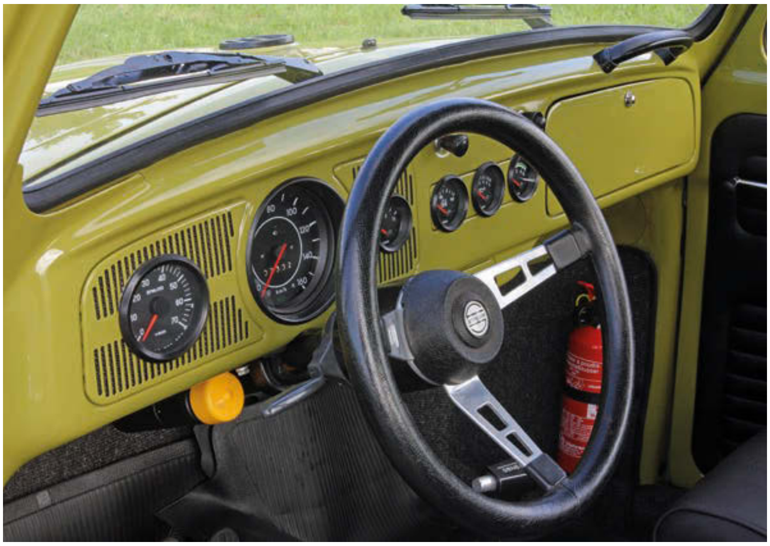
Both Beetles run black T-bars and have lost their factory front indicators



Most engine components used on this 2332cc lump came from Scat Enterprises

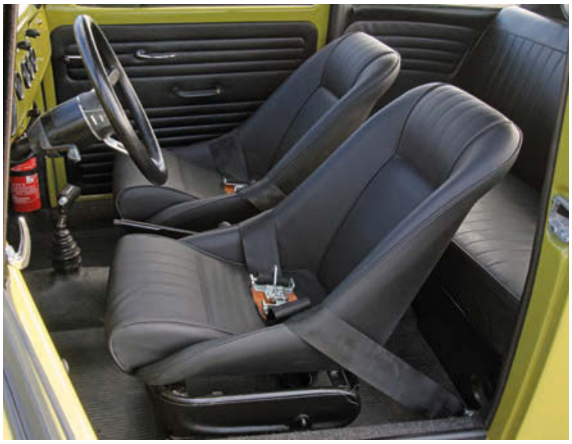
Good looking mirror was more commonly found on Formula Vee race cars

While fairly large (7Jx15), the unpolished Porsche alloys fit neatly under the rear wings



The VDO gauge installation, with three set in the middle of the dash, differs from David's '64

Often seen in racing Austin Minis, Paddy Hopkirk seats look at home in this sporty interior



Feeling the urge

"My interest in Volkswagens stems from my teenage years," reveals Ben. "I was 18 when my parents bought me an all-stock '73 Bug, which I used 'as-is' for three years. I then decided to restore it, while modifying it a bit, influenced by the German Look. The car received 16in Fuchs rims, along with a RS blue paintjob, as seen on some Porsches."

Ben began hanging out with DAS in the late '90s and immediately felt part of the family, though his ride did not quite fit with the club's California Look boundaries, hence he never became a member. He still managed to participate in quite a few of their activities, either with his '73 Beetle or '70 Squareback. But all along, he felt the urge to build a Cal Looker… "A friend told me about one of his acquaintances, who wanted to sell several of his old VWs," he continues. "He owned a handful of treasures, including a white '65 sunroof Beetle with a red interior – it proved the ideal candidate to become a DAS prospect."

Once purchased by Ben, the '65 sat for a while, as life got in the way, from kids joining the family to work on a new house. Yet, he remained in touch with his DAS mates, as he explains: "They even invited me to join a group of 15 of them on a trip to Southern California in June 2014. The visit included the pre-VW Classic DKP Cruise Night, where I saw a bunch of '70s-style Cal Look VWs, which led to the decision to build my '65 following the typical attributes of the era – think dechromed 'shell and T-bars for instance."

Clubbing together

Fellow DAS club member David Baland proved invaluable as soon as the car's resurrection got underway, having both the historical and technical knowledge. While the two friends did a lot of the spanner spinning together, coachwork specialist Chris Cheron took care of the bodyshell repairs, removing all mouldings along the way. Another DAS member, Laurent Dejeaifve, then painted the body in Goldgrün, a 1960s Porsche hue. Black epoxy covers several goodies (T-bars, handles, Standard Bug vent wings…), as well as the floorpan, which is equipped with an adjustable beam narrowed 3in, plus CB Performance dropped spindles. The same company supplied the front disc brake kit, whilst Type 3 drums feature at the rear.

We like the fact that Ben resisted the urge to polish the 6Jx15 and 7Jx15 Fuchs rims, incidentally wrapped with 145/15 Firestone and 185/15 Vredestein Sprint Classic rubber. He then handled the wiring installation, a job he knows well being an automotive electrician by trade at D'Ieteren – Belgium's official VW importer established in the early 1950s. The final step involved Ben mounting a variety of accessories: Paddy Hopkirk front seats with Simpson harnesses, original Springalex steering wheel (a birthday present from David), VDO gauges, Berg shifter, TMI side panels, along with a restored Formula Vee outside mirror.

Motivation comes from a 2332cc long-block, purchased from Scat Enterprises in California, which obviously conceals numerous Scat components as described in our Tech Info boxout. In harmony with the exterior, the engine's appearance has more than a hint of '70s Cal Look to it, from the Weber 48 IDA with a Berg linkage, to the VW Thing/Trekker fan shroud housing a generator.

TECH INFO

BODY
Dechromed 1964 bodyshell; front turn signals behind grilles; black T-bars; Formula Vee mirror; VW L518 Java Green paint

ENGINE
2276cc by Pat Deperne and David Baland; Autolinea alloy case; 82mm DPR counterweighted crank; 94mm Scat/Mahle cylinders/pistons; Carrillo 5.352 thou rods; 9.0:1 compression ratio; 40mm x 35.5mm DRD L5 heads; Scat 1.4:1 rocker arms; Gene Berg GB309 cam; Scat lifters; Bosch 009 distributor disguised as a 010 and Bosch blue coil; Italian Weber 48IDAs with Berg linkage; Scat 1-$^5/_8$in header and Turbo exhaust; Scat 12.5lb flywheel; Thing/Trekker fan shroud; Berg full-flow system with Berg pump; Berg oil sump; Berg crank pulley

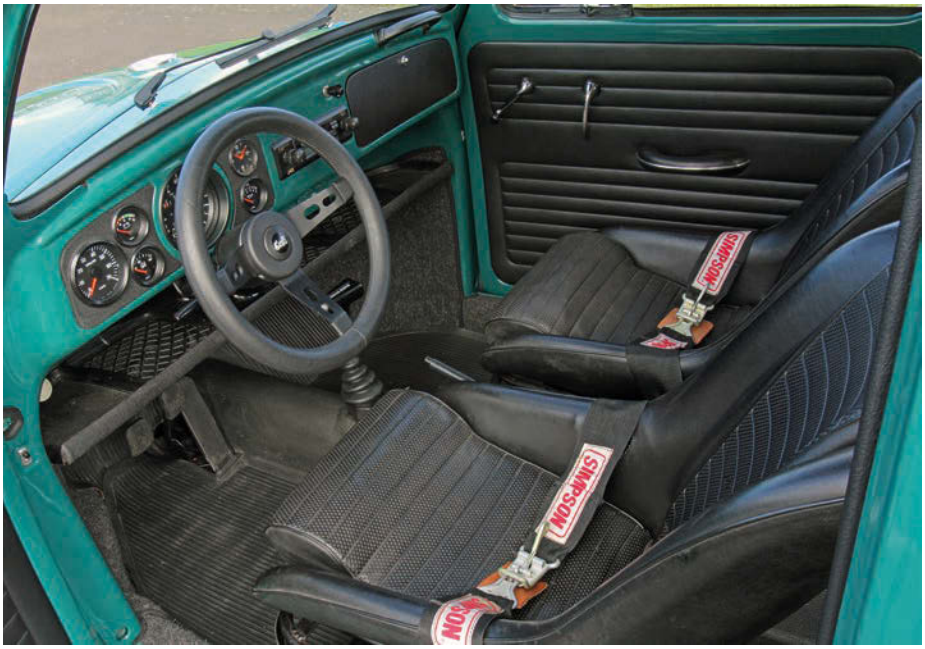
GEARBOX
Stock 4-speed; 3.88 ring and pinion

SUSPENSION
Original 1964 'pan; Type 1 beam with anti-roll bar lowering kit; stock shocks in front; KYB shocks aft

WHEELS & TYRES
5Jx15 BRM replicas; polished and repainted (matt wrinkle); Kleber 145/15 and Vredestein 185/15 tyres

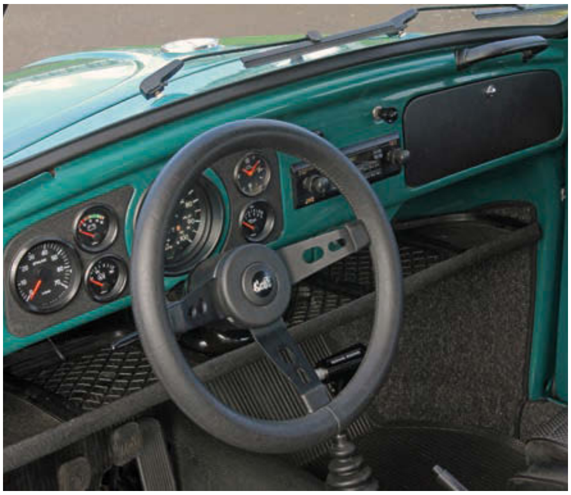
BRAKES
Empi disc brakes at the front; rebuilt Type 3 drums at the rear

INTERIOR
Dash with wrinkle finish details; US-spec '72 speedo; five VDO gauges; unknown front seats; Simpson harnesses; '70 Standard rear bench; TMI side panels; Scat steering wheel; Berg shifter; VW-supplied parcel shelf

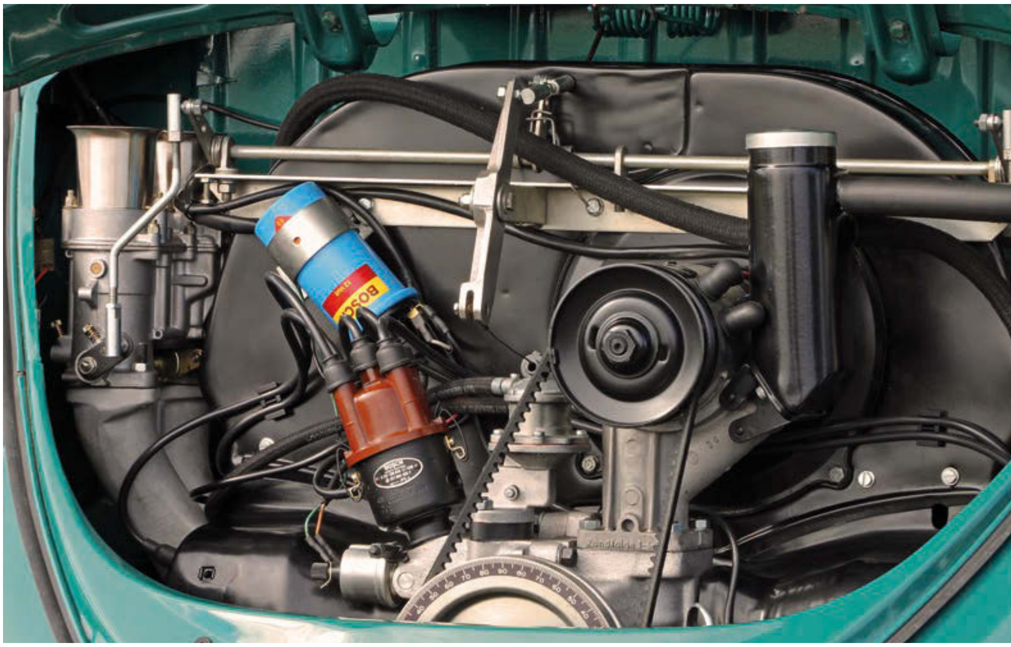


Harnesses and lots of black vinyl gives David Baland's '64 Beetle a suitably hard-core racer feel inside

The simple design of the 185/15 Vredestein rubber lends itself ideally to a Cal Look project

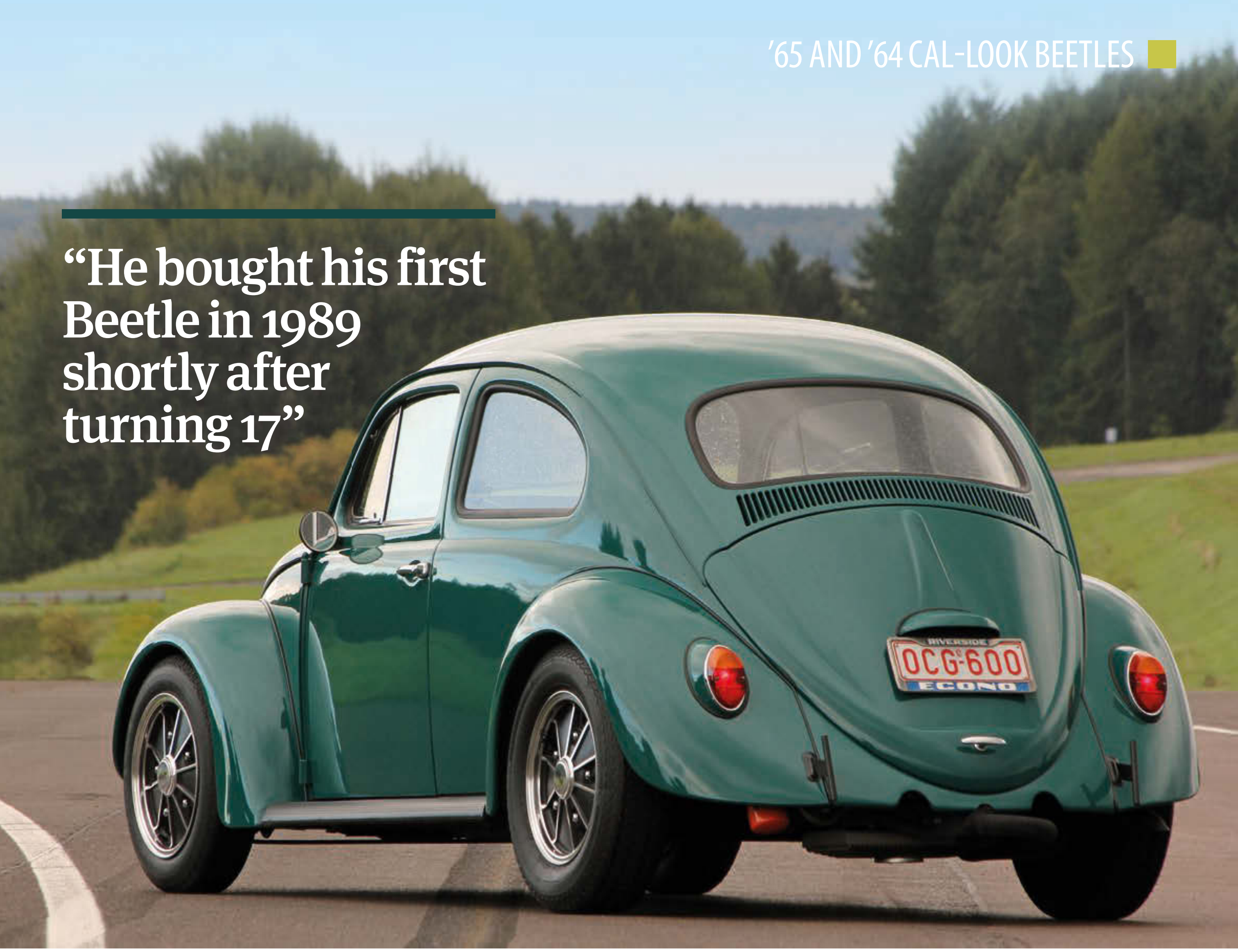


Berg shifter, VDO gauges, Scat steering wheel: just a handful of California Look classics!

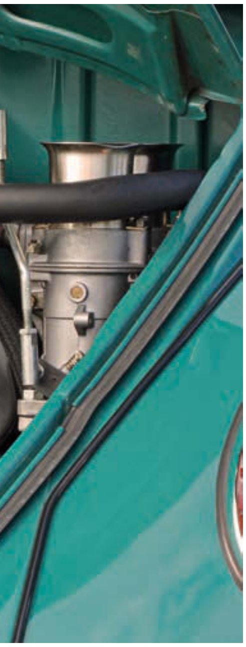


David teamed with his old friend Pat Deperne to assemble this stout 2276cc motor

“He bought his first Beetle in 1989 shortly after turning 17”



^ Vent wings remain in place, as one-piece window kits did not appear on the scene before the second half of the ’70s



Some like it hot

As a teenager, David Baland showed interest in hot rodding in general, although he gravitated around air-cooled Dubs as well. He bought his first Beetle in 1989 shortly after turning 17, as he remembers: “It was a Gemini model, a Special Edition unique to the Belgian market, which became my daily driver for a few years. I then purchased a ’53 Oval followed by a ’55 which was in generally better shape. It morphed into a tribute to the ‘pre-Cal Look’ Bugs, built in California in the ’60s by folks such as Ron Fleming of DKP.” Many other VWs followed; so many in fact that we can’t list them all. And that’s not even mentioning the tricked out American cars he’s owned since the 1990s…

Trading ideas

In 1992, David teamed up with Pat Deperne and the late Philippe ‘Philar’ Poliart to launch DAS. Their friendship led to David and Pat becoming partners in PAT Stock & Performance, a major Belgian VW retailer to this day; however, Baland left the company after eight years. He continued being involved with the scene and set about creating a ’70s-style Cal Looker – a ‘Traditional Cal Look’ as he calls it. He could not convince himself to dechrome his ’55 Oval, hence the search for another Bug ensued. He settled on a ’64, never hit and imported from Sweden. “It was in decent shape,” he adds. “The doors were shot so I found a dry one in Arizona and the other, New Old Stock door was sourced through BBT.” He originally planned to paint the car black, but happened to like the vehicle’s original colour, Java Green. After repairing the body, it lost its mouldings and front turn signals; then came a few coats of fresh L518 paint.

Era correct

David installed a handful of California Look-specific products, such as the window rubbers without the factory mouldings and black Formula Vee style mirrors. However, he retained the vent windows “as many of the first Cal Lookers kept them,” he clarifies. “I also prefer black T-bars, as I find them less conspicuous. Inside, the speaker grilles, painted wrinkle black, welcome a set of VDO gauges. I also added a ’72 speedo from the US and the decades-old radio came from a car imported from the States, too.” To finish the cockpit, David installed a couple of bucket seats of unknown origin, which match the TMI door panels. Note the lack of chrome accessories inside, enhanced by the use of a black Berg shifter, black headliner, original rubber mats and Scat steering wheel, along with an antique VW-supplied parcel tray under the dash.

Sweet torque

When it came to the chassis, David elected a simple setup with an anti-roll bar equipped front beam, stock shocks up front and KYBs in the rear. The main modern concession comes courtesy of new Empi disc brakes fore, complemented with Type 3 drums aft.

We met Ben and David at the DAS Drag Day, where the club celebrated its 25th anniversary

You can't fool with safety, considering the engine of choice. He and Pat Deperne worked together on a healthy 2276cc fed by Weber 48IDAs… "I've been accumulating parts for the motor for years – many were purchased from Gene Berg Enterprises in 1997," David told us. Our Tech Sheet divulges additional info about this torquey yet very driveable powerplant, based around an aluminium case. With its IDAs, Thing/Trekker shroud and tin painted in black epoxy, this motor is a throwback to the 1970s Cal Look era. Incidentally, the same can be said about his choice of rims, polished/repainted BRM replicas shod with 145/15 Kleber and fatter Vredestein 185/15 radials.

We have to admit, both cars would have looked perfectly at home on the boulevards of Orange County during the late 1970s. Of course, some fashion from that period has not aged quite as gracefully…

“both cars would have looked perfectly at home on the boulevards of Orange County...”

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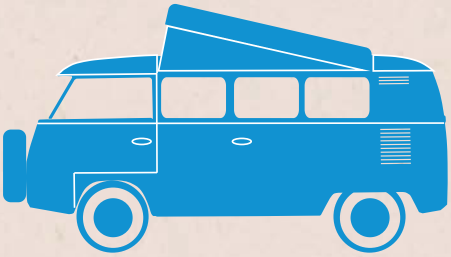

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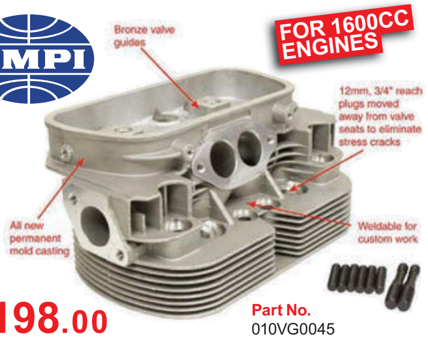
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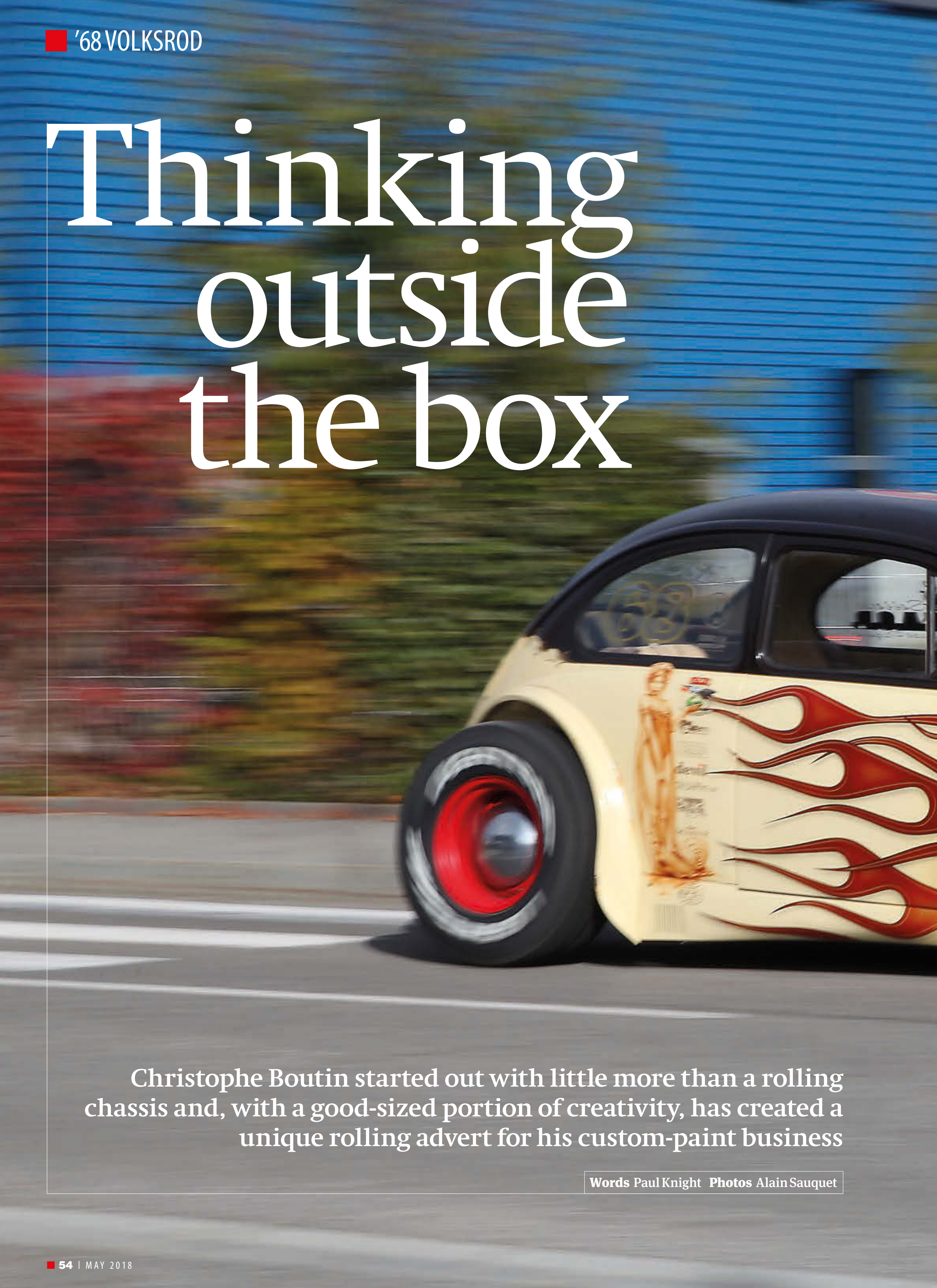
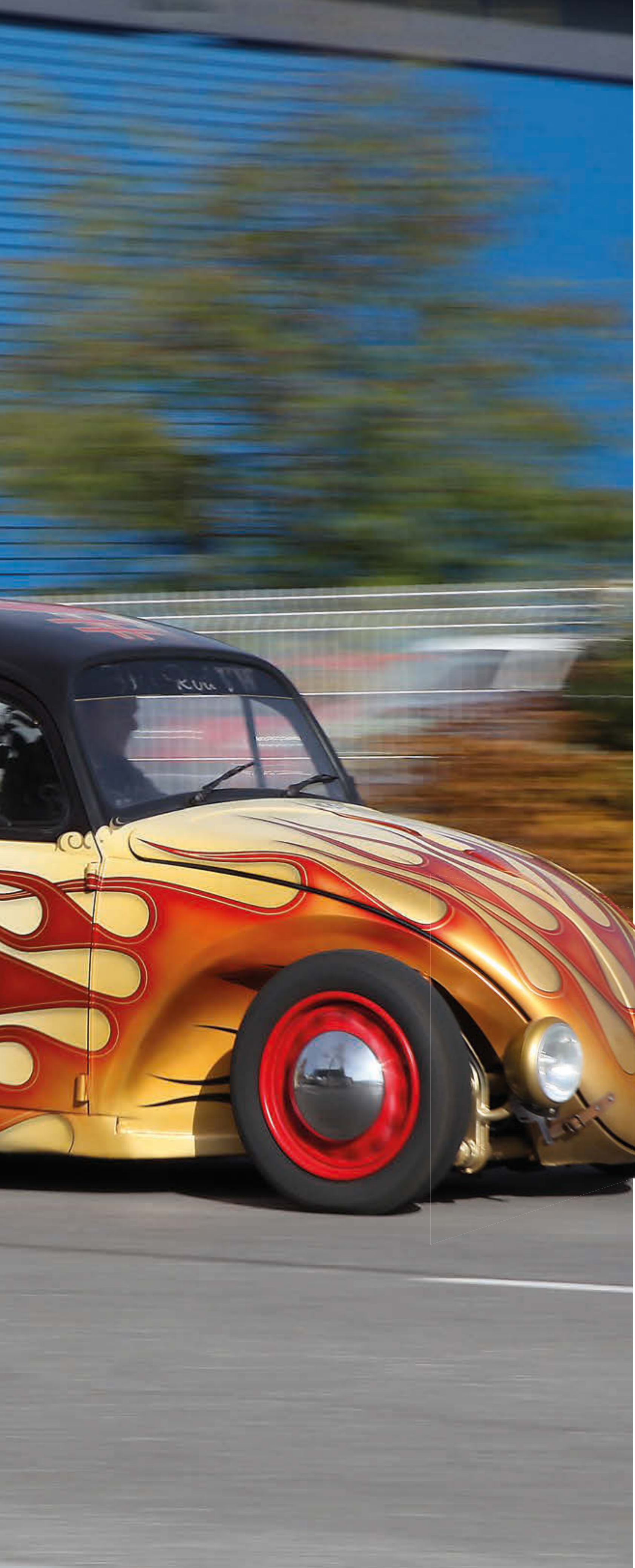
Thinking outside the box



Christophe Boutin started out with little more than a rolling chassis and, with a good-sized portion of creativity, has created a unique rolling advert for his custom-paint business

Words Paul Knight **Photos** Alain Sauquet



Christophe Boutin is the proprietor of Boutin Design, a custom auto and motorcycle paint shop based in Saint-Martin-Bellevue (which is in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, south-eastern France), and is well known for his creative airbrushing on everything from crash helmets to race cars and custom bikes. So, when he decided it was time to build a fun car, it was always going to be something bright and eye-catching, that could also double up as a great rolling advertisement for the business.

Now, when we say Christophe started with a blank canvas, we're not joking! This project began as nothing more than a bare, rolling chassis, which had previously seen use beneath a long wheelbase Buggy body. Starting with practically nothing, this project could have headed in any direction, but Christophe had already penned out some sketches and had decided that a Volksrod would make the perfect showcase for some of the custom modifications and wild paint ideas that he had in mind.

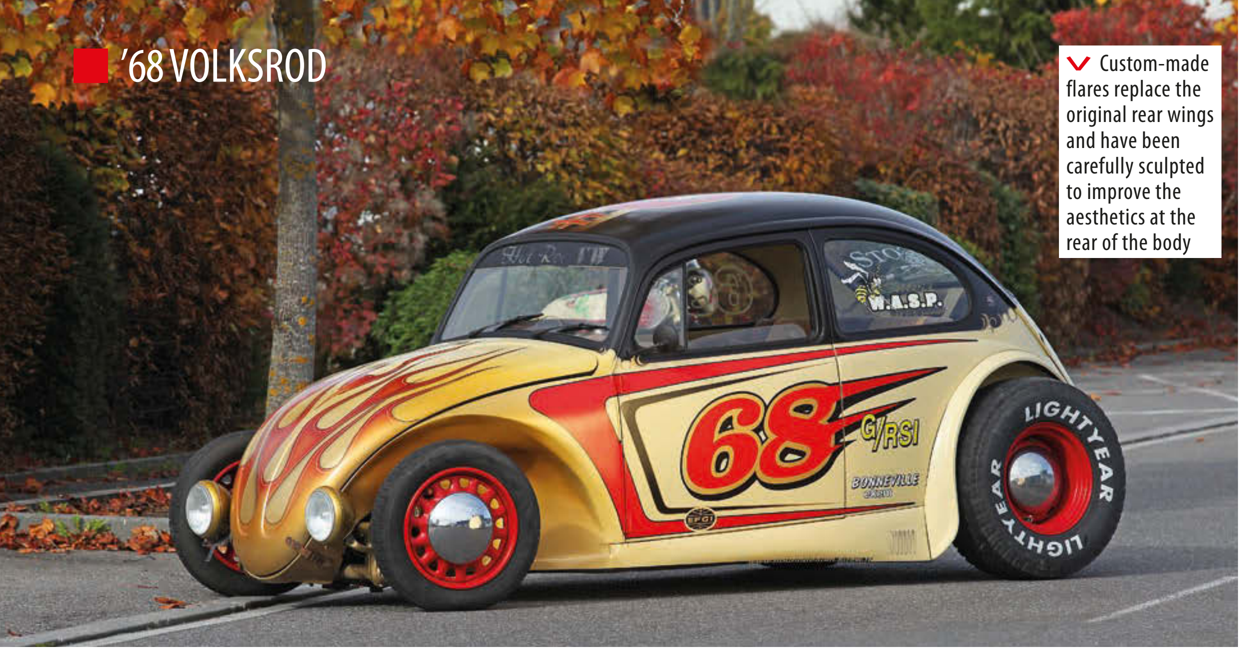
> "when your car looks as wild as this, you want to make sure everyone gets time to take it all in"

Loud and proud

This was also to be a budget-built vehicle; hence the decision to assemble a stripped-out Volksrod also meant that Christophe wouldn't have to blow his funds locating hard-to-find panels and parts. However, he would need at least a basic bodyshell, which he was fortunate enough to locate via a local VW fan. He also picked up a good, running 1300cc single port motor, which was deemed to be ideal for this build. Sure, fast may be fun but, when your car looks as wild as this, you want to make sure everyone gets time to take it all in as you slowly drive by in style!

Reliability was the name of the game; hence the motor was serviced and fitted up with an Objectif Performance ignition kit and an electric fuel pump, while Christophe removed the heater outlets from the fanhousing before painting the tin in red and cream. Oh, and he also went on to fabricate a custom exhaust system, which exits via a Devil megaphone… and yes, it's very loud.

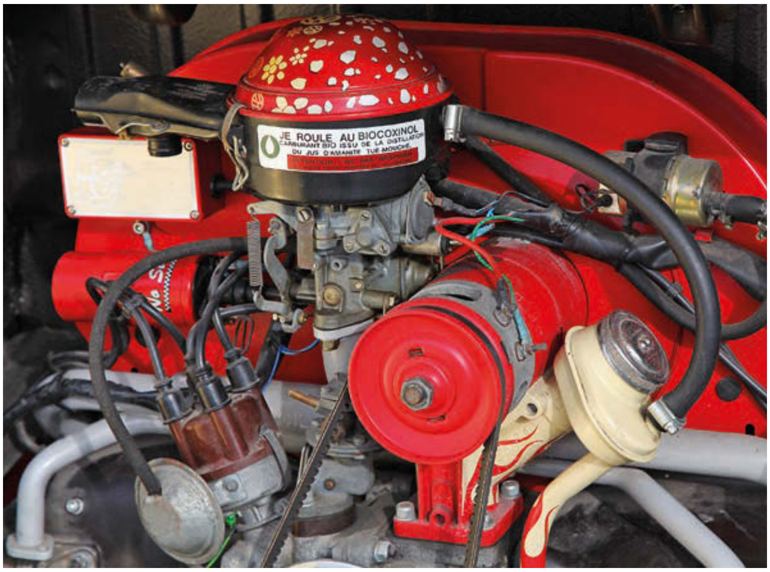
With the motor in place, it was time to trial-fit the body and start to work on the stance and visual aspects of this project. Christophe decided to keep the rear banded steel wheels that had come with the ex-Buggy chassis, which were fitted with huge 31x10.50R15 off-road tyres.



Custom-made flares replace the original rear wings and have been carefully sculpted to improve the aesthetics at the rear of the body

An Objectif Performance ignition kit has been fitted to the sweet-running 1300cc single-port motor

Objectif
Performance



The stock, oil bath air filter has been painted like a mushroom…

However, at the front, he needed something smaller and better suited to the hot rod theme. Christophe told us, "I found a pair of 4in wide rims from a 1928 Citroën C4, which I adapted to fit the front of the Bug." Ingenious, or what? Painted red to match the rear wheels and fitted with a pair of 125R15 tyres from a Citroën 2CV, they suited the theme perfectly.

All front

Next it was time to fit an extension kit to the front end, which pushes the adjustable beam forward by 15cm. Suddenly things were starting to take shape and Christophe was able to cut away the front sheet metal and begin to fabricate some fresh panels to tidy up the space beneath the hood etc.

A lot of time went into the smoothing and cleaning of the inner wheel arches and also the fabrication of sculptured front and rear valance panels, which follow the lines of the bonnet and decklid, but the result was more than worthwhile. Finally, the dashboard was smoothed over and the door handles and exterior trim were welded up to smooth the rest of the body out.

Standing back and checking the profile, there were some awkward angles and areas that Christophe decided to tackle next. The first was the gap just in front of the rear wheel, which was previously covered by the wing. The body ended abruptly here and you could see the torsion housing, hence a pair of fibreglass flares were crafted to tidy this section up and make the side of the vehicle look proportionally correct and visually more appealing. This led to the next visual conundrum – the large and angular gap beneath the body, which was caused by the nose-down stance and extreme tyre profiles. The solution here was to create a pair of lower sills from sheet steel, which are tapered from front to rear to level the gap between the body and the floor. Louvres were punched into the rear of the sills to add a little detail, and the overall effect is pleasing as it visually lowers and levels the Bug.

>

Christophe Boutin stands proudly alongside his wild Volksrod creation!

TECH INFO

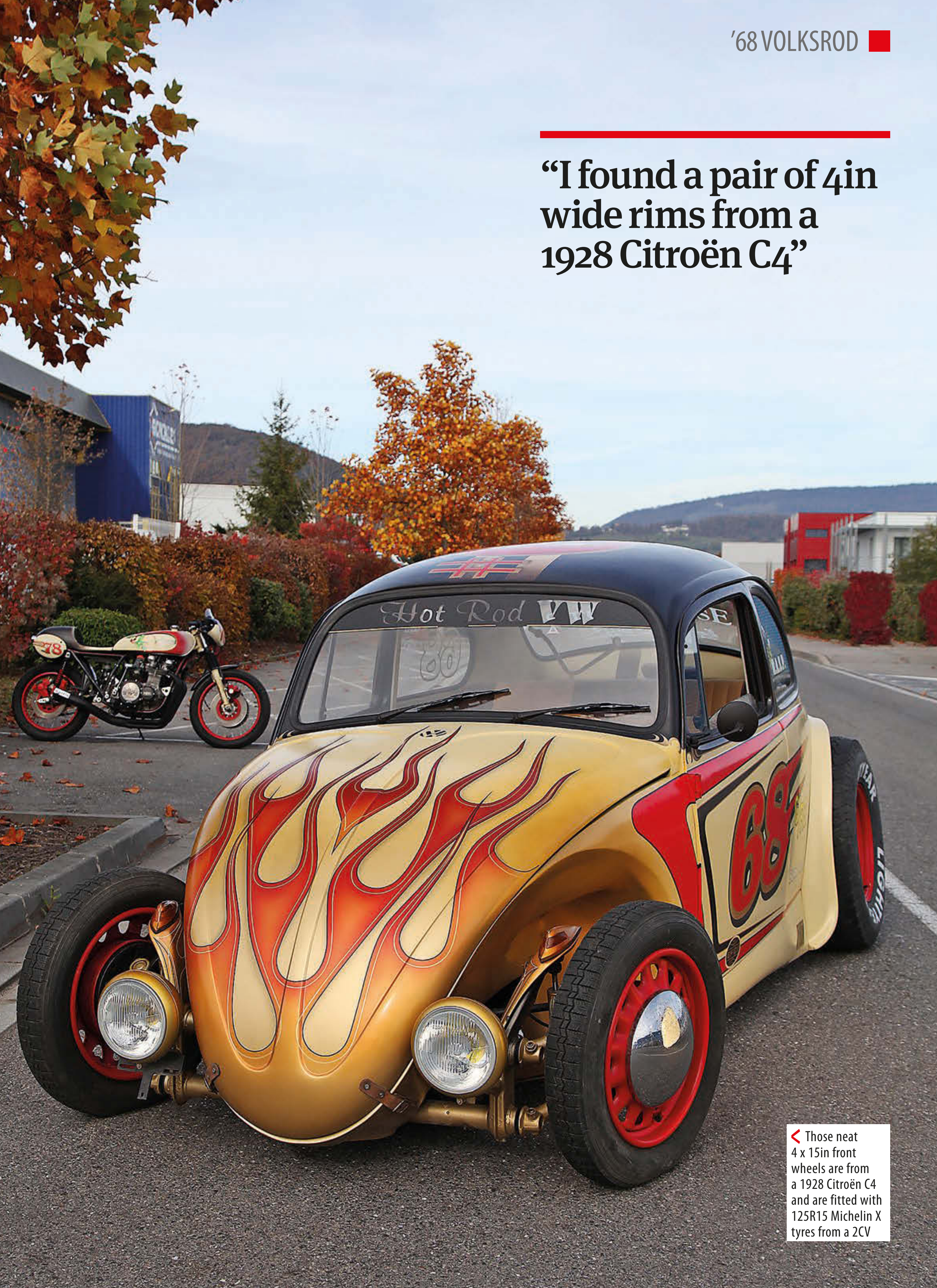
BODY
1968 Volksrod with custom side sills and one-off rear side flares; front and rear valances formed to match bonnet and decklid; stock VW chassis with 15cm beam extension kit; painted two-tone LZ1M Creme Beige and L73 Chestnut brown; airbrushed flames and scallops in tangerine pearl and special-mix red; airbrushing and pin striping by Boutin Design (www.boutindesign.sitew.fr)

ENGINE
Stock 1300cc single port motor with electronic ignition and 4-into-1 Devil megaphone

SUSPENSION
Front lowered approx 5cm, rear dropped by one outer spline

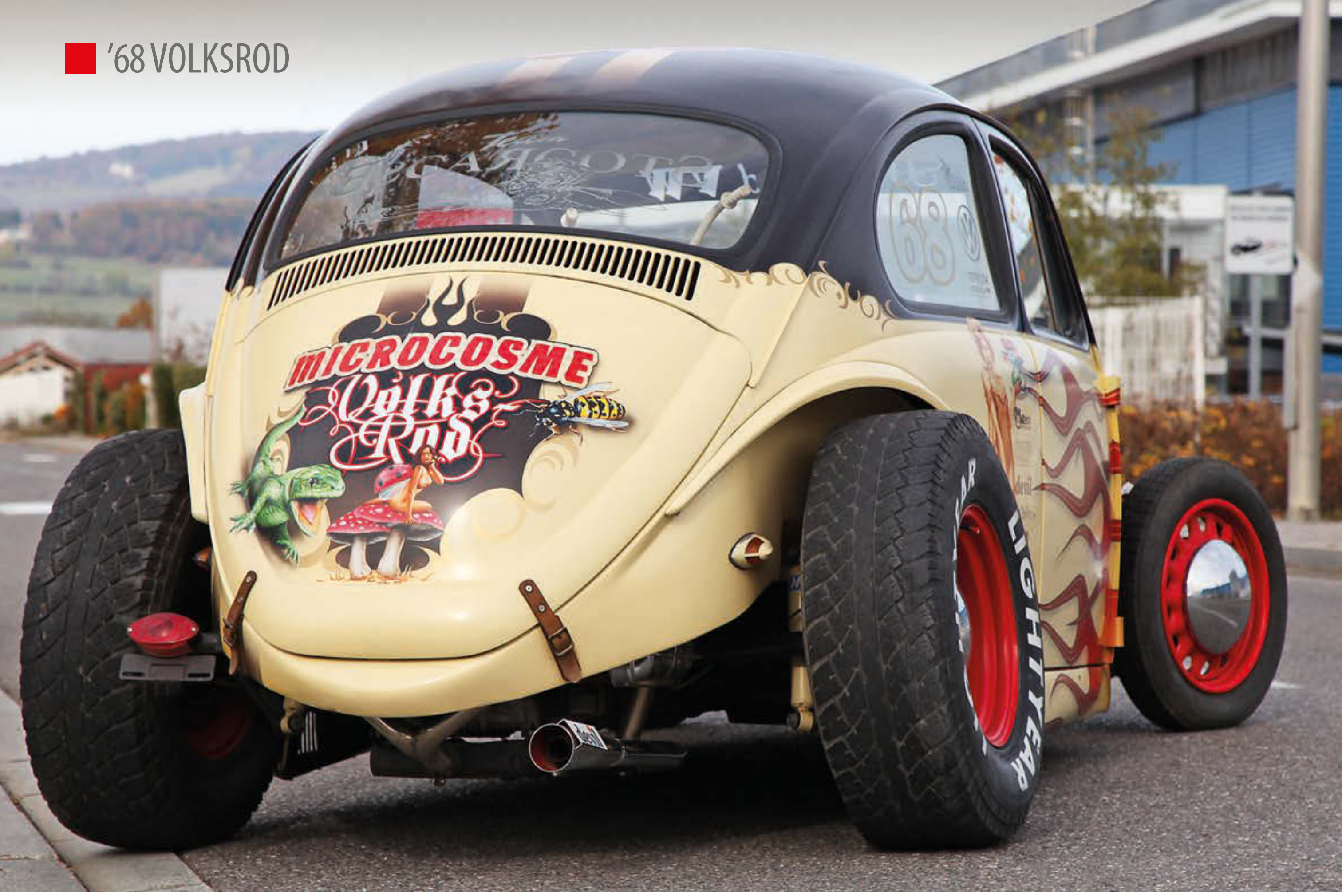
INTERIOR
Flamed seats; racing stripes on the headliner; custom-trimmed door-cards; smoothed dashboard; repositioned switches and a Grant wood rimmed steering wheel

WHEELS & TYRES
1928 Citroën C4 4x15 front wheels with 125R15 tyres from a Citroën 2CV; rears are banded steels (VW) with Wild Country XTX 31x10.50R15 off-road tyres



"I found a pair of 4in wide rims from a 1928 Citroën C4"

Those neat 4 x 15in front wheels are from a 1928 Citroën C4 and are fitted with 125R15 Michelin X tyres from a 2CV



Stroke of genius

Finally it was time to start working on the paintwork, which was going to be quite an epic adventure. With a base of LZ1M Creme Beige, Christophe next applied L73 Chestnut brown to the top half of the Bug. Incidentally, did you spot the neat, gold-'striped scrollwork on the front and rear corners, which divides the two colours?

This is where things started to get a little out of hand, as Christophe wanted to include not only some personal touches, but also some techniques and paint styles that were popular amongst his customers. It explains why one side of the vehicle wears hot-rod style scallops with race numbers, while the other is flame, as per the front end. The roof also features faded race stripes and numbers, while the engine lid and the passenger side of the car received some 'Boutin' custom airbrushing. Christophe even carried this detail work through the dashboard, and we love the fact that the two-tone finish carries on inside, and continues from the dashboard through to the doors.

The candy-tangerine flames and graphics were accented using a range of colours (to add shadows, depth and detail) before the pin striping was added and, after all the custom painting was complete, Christophe sealed the entire body with a satin-finish clear lacquer.

Winging it

With this done, it was time to start building up the body and Christophe added some neat touches such as the leather straps on the bonnet and decklid and a single, offset rear brake light (which might not be exactly 'street-legal' but, on a wing-less Volksrod like this, it's just another 'technicality' to add to an already long list…)

In case you were wondering, the rear flasher units fitted to the inner wings are actually from a Harley-Davidson motorcycle. Christophe also used these on the front end, where they are mounted to the slick, re-profiled shock towers on the front beam. And, while we're at the front, those headlamps are also Harley-Davidson parts, and are mounted via brackets welded to the beam. The overall effect is superb, and the lights and re-shaped shock towers are perhaps our favourite details on this wild ride.

^ Out back, the decklid features more airbrushed artwork and is latched in place via a pair of leather straps

> The roar from the Devil megaphone belies the mild-mannered performance of the single-port 1300cc motor

> "the rear flasher units fitted to the inner wings are actually from a Harley-Davidson motorcycle"

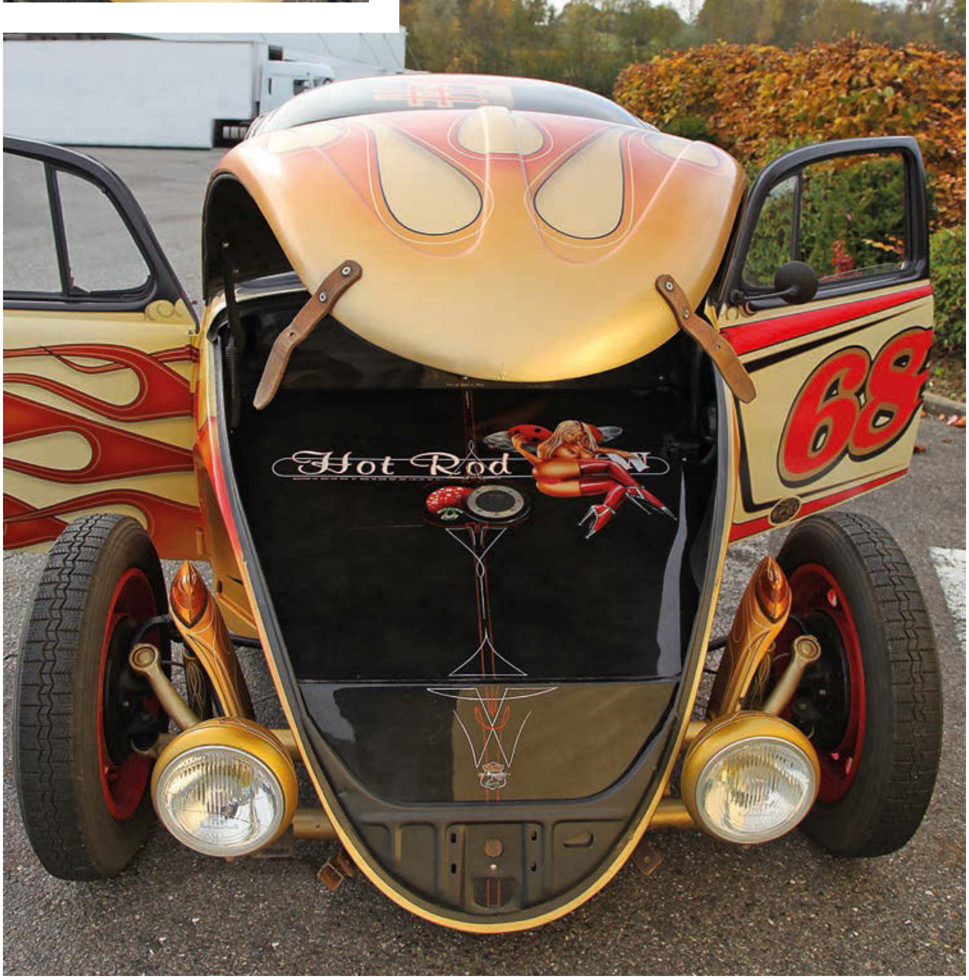
>

Note the faded race stripes and giant '68' logo on the roof

We love the gold 'striped scrollwork separating the two-tone paint

The pinstriped headlight units are Harley-Davidson motorcycle parts, which are mounted to the VW beam via custom brackets

Even the underside of the decklid has been custom-painted



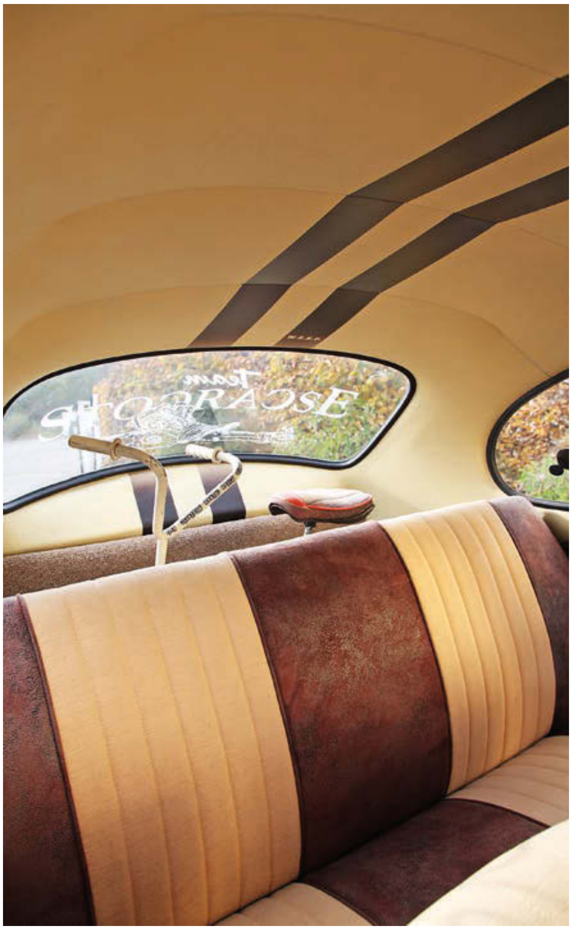
Under the bonnet Christophe has fabricated fresh metalwork to cover the custom fuel tank

In case you were wondering, these indicator units were also once fitted to a Harley-Davidson motorcycle

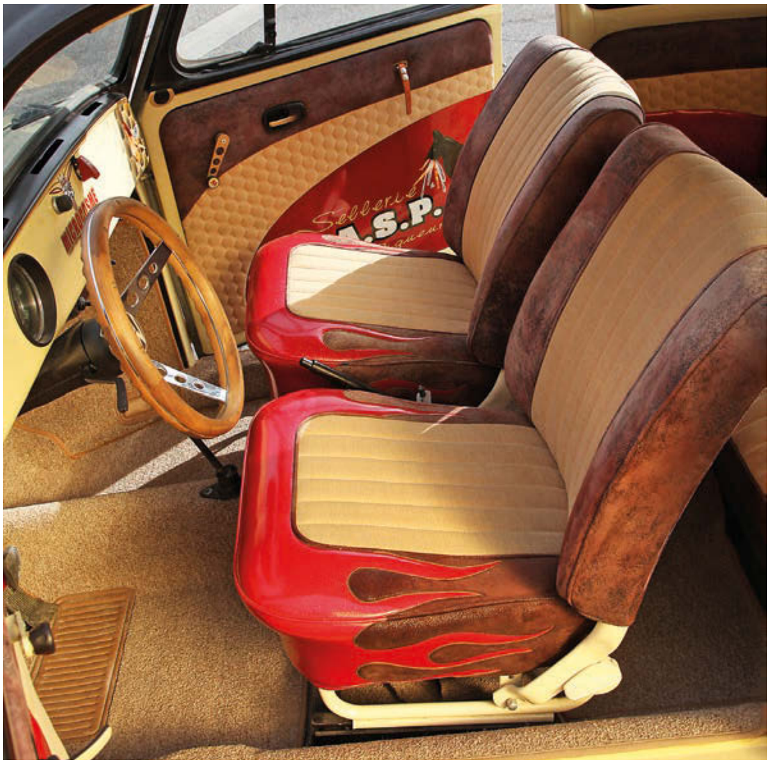
Banded steel rims fitted with Wild Country XTX tyres (from a 4x4), which measure 31in tall and 10.5in wide. Christophe added the 'Lightyear' lettering (as worn by Lightning McQueen and co. in the movie, *Cars*)

LIGHTYEAR
LIGHTYEAR

The striped headliner, which reflects the custom-painted stripes on the outside



La Guêpe Upholstery made a great job of the flamed seats



Note the airbrushed horn push on the Grant wood-rim steering wheel

Stock shift knob custom painted with a '68' logo

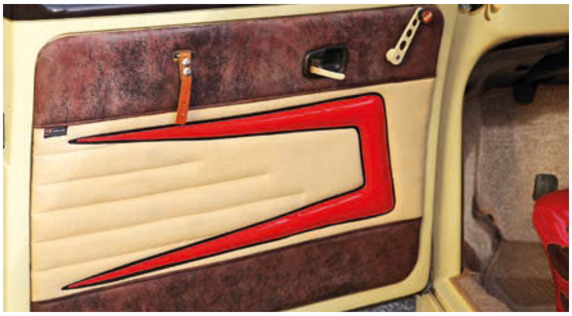
Even the seat adjuster/slider knobs have been custom painted to match the hot-rod theme

> **"the two-tone finish carries on inside, and continues from the dashboard through to the doors"**

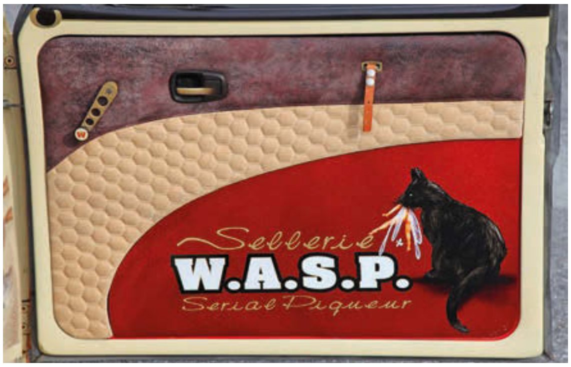
And so, with the exterior complete and looking great, it was time to move inside the Bug. Christophe explained, "I didn't want this to be like a rat rod inside, hence I made sure the interior was just as wild and creative as the exterior." The carpets were fitted and the seats trimmed by his ex-partner at La Guêpe Upholstery. However, following their split, Christophe turned to Hureau in Annecy to complete the door cards and headliner etc.

Finishing touches include a Grant woodrim steering wheel and some '68' logos on the shift knob and the seat slider knobs – the level of detail is insane, and the closer you look, the more you see.

It's certainly a unique project packed full of fresh ideas, which makes it the perfect showcase for Boutin Design… not to mention one of the craziest company cars we've ever seen. ■



French trimmer Hureau tackled the door cards – as per the paintwork, each side is different



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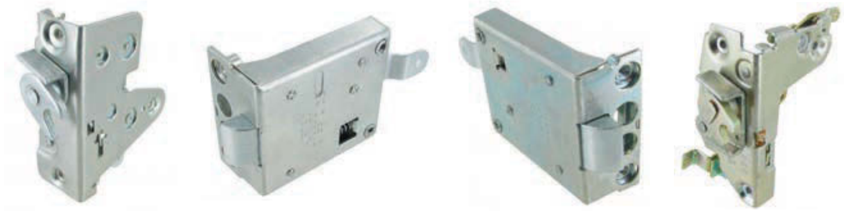
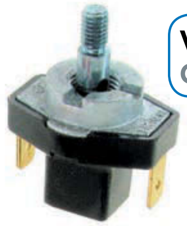


# 04638

Wiper/ambulance switch

This is an original Volkswagen switch used to activate the wipers but also to turn the ambulance lights on.



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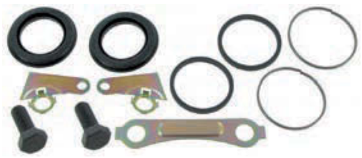

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# 20384

Pop-out latch knobs

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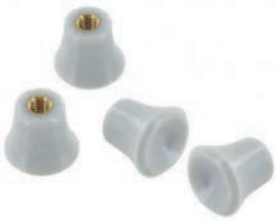
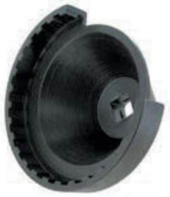


# 01144

Pinion nut socket

The locking nut securing the pinion bearing of the differential can only be installed and removed using a genuine VW tool. This new socket is the exact copy of the original VW tool.



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Panel decision

We first came across Tony Grant's 1959 Split Screen Panel Van when it picked up a well-deserved trophy at Leeds VW Festival last year. Parked amongst the other trophy winners in their special display in front of Harewood House, the amount of attention it received was unthinkable. It didn't have the usual patina'd sign writing, it wasn't festooned with period-looking accessories and there wasn't a monster engine out back. No, instead Tony had focused on stance, reliability and keeping things straightforward – and it's an approach that seemed to go down a treat with the throng of people that encircled it.

Best of both worlds

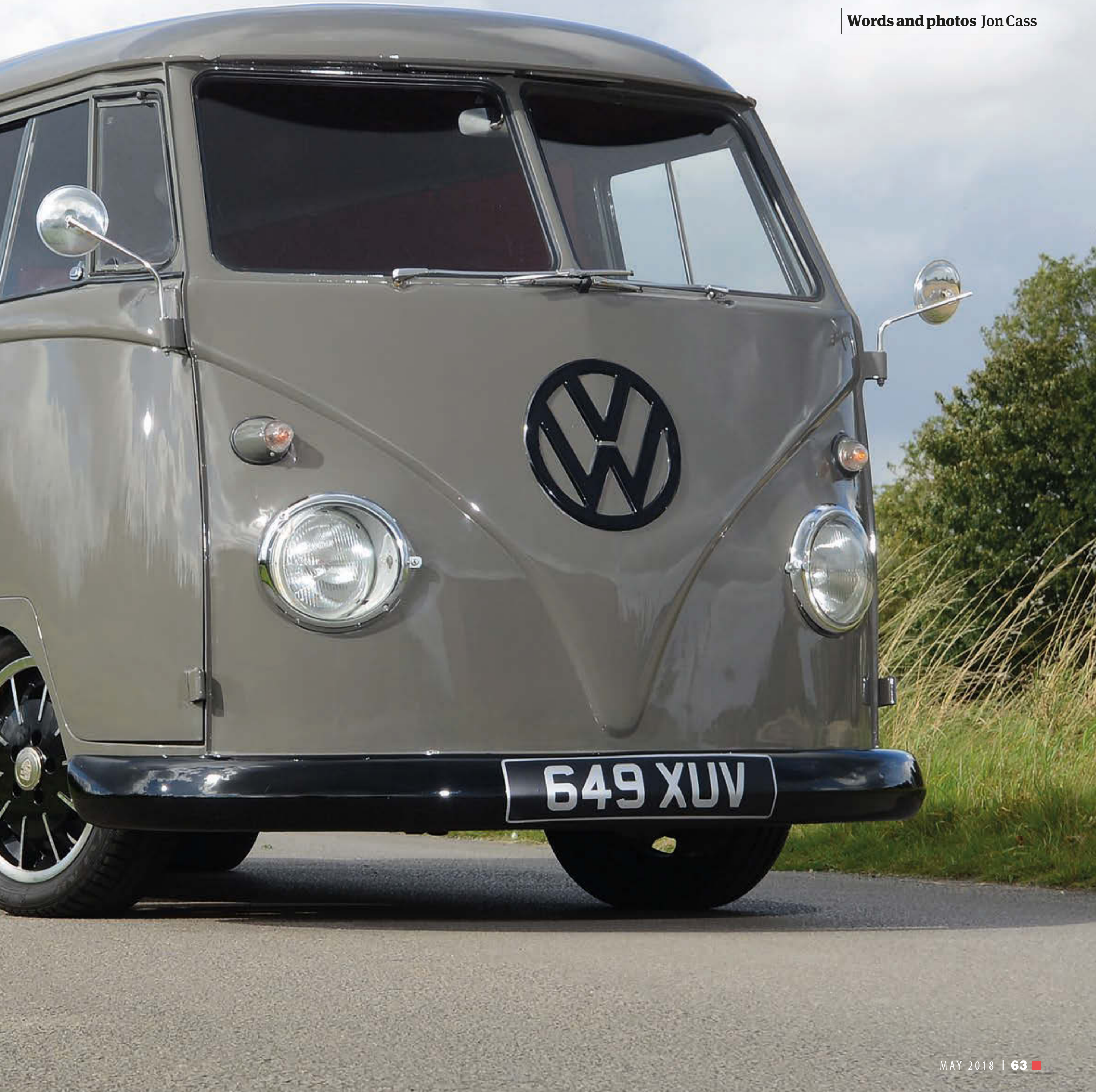
For the previous ten years Tony had run a Mercedes camper, modified with blacked out windows and large alloys. "I started going to shows in the Merc and found myself at more and more VW gatherings, so it made sense to change to a VW badged vehicle instead," he explains. This came in the shape of a VW T5 Sportline, a vehicle he uses as his daily driver. But the more events he went to, the more he began to hanker after something more classic. "I really fancied a Split Bus or Early Bay to go with my T5," he explained, "not necessarily just for shows, but to use and enjoy running during the week."

After around a year of searching, Tony eventually found a suitable candidate in nearby Hull that ticked all the right boxes. It was a 1959 Panel Van registered on 1 January 1960 that had been imported from the States in 2009. "It was a Barndoor with bullet indicators and small window and the interior was still a bare shell, it hadn't been converted into a camper, which was a real bonus."

Best of all, it was relatively solid and the bits of restoration work that did need doing had already been carried out, including the whole bottom of the front clip which was brand

Tony Grant's no-frills Panel Van demonstrates that simple and subtle is the best way to go when it comes to creating a cool looking commercial

Words and photos Jon Cass



> **“I preferred to have more exhaust on show, scraping the floor on mild speed humps for effect”**

new, saving Tony a mammoth task. It had been recently resprayed in the attractive grey hue you see here, so a deal was struck which included interior work being done to Tony’s specifications.

Tony wanted to keep things simple so requested a Rusty Lee rock and roll bed along with chequered floor, red vinyl for the seats and a grey suede effect roof lining. “The van was sent to Rob the Upholsterer in Leeds, who’s famed for his work on VW interiors, and he did a great job,” Tony smiles.

But the joy of getting the Van back complete with its fresh new trim was short lived as Tony had issues selecting gear. “The van had been fitted with a Berg shifter and I struggled to find any gears a lot of the time and, to make matters worse, it kept stalling.” Luckily, help was at hand courtesy of Tony’s son, Connor, who works at Mark Hart Engineering in nearby Bridlington. They subsequently removed the entire gear linkage front to back before coming to the conclusion that the main issue causing the poor gear selection was the Berg shifter being attached to a longer stemmed gearstick from a ‘66-67 Bus with washers making up the gap. This was quickly replaced with the correct original gearstick and all the bushes and gear linkage were replaced which allowed the gears to be selected with factory precision.

Really motoring

However, with the Van still stalling and sometimes failing to start altogether, after starting to replace some of the fuel lines, Tony decided to start from scratch, pull the engine and get Mark Hart to carry out a full rebuild. It’s now fitted with fresh 1600 twin port heads and pistons and a dynamo has been installed instead of the more common alternator swap. Once reinstalled, the newly built engine ran fine, but annoyingly the fuel problems persisted. “After trying a few reproduction 34-Pict Solex carbs, I eventually purchased one from Riverhaus which turned out to be a good move as once fitted it ran perfectly. I’d highly recommend an original VW carb in these situations,” Tony adds.

To help reduce excess noise from the engine inside the van, Tony fitted Dynamat sound insulation while the engine lid now benefits from a gas strut instead of the original hinge prop giving much easier access when maintaining the van.

You’ll probably have noticed the Vintage Speed full flow stainless exhaust, which Tony chose over the more practical tail tuck exhaust. “I preferred to have more exhaust on show, scraping the floor on mild speed humps for effect,” he explains. The holed heat exchangers were replaced with stainless steel J tubes and a larger main jet fitted to the carb in keeping with the new full flow exhaust.

Whilst working on the engine, Tony noticed that the

TECH INFO

BODY
1959 Split Screen Panel Van, originally supplied in Dove Blue but now painted a 'mystery' VW hue; gas strut engine lid support

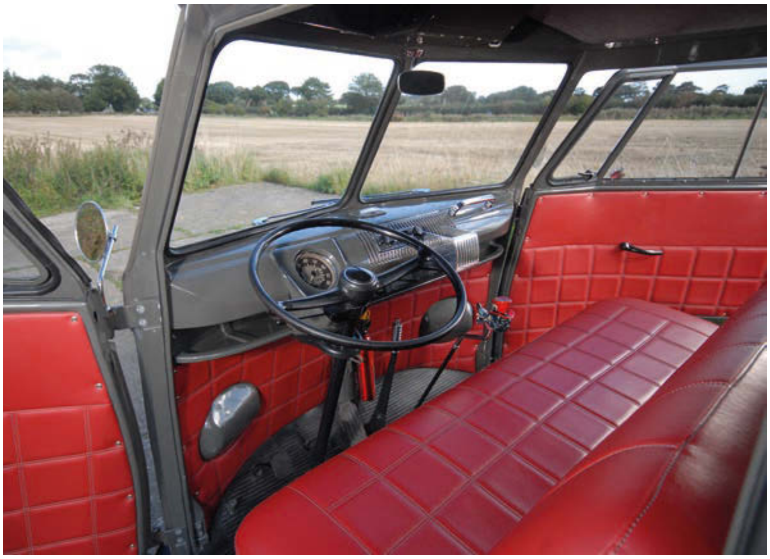
ENGINE
Rebuilt 1600 twin port; angled oil filter; Vintage Speed full flow stainless exhaust

SUSPENSION
Spax adjustable shocks all round; flipped front spindles; modified trailing arms; 4in narrowed front beam; straight axle conversion at the rear

BRAKES
Audi front disc brakes with adaptor plates

INTERIOR
Front bench and rear seats retrimmed in red vinyl; Rusty Lee rock and roll bed; grey suede effect headlining; chequered floor; Dynamat insulation; automatic fire extinguisher system; 1960 Sharp radio; chrome grab handle and drinks holder; overhead air box with aftermarket chrome deflectors

WHEELS AND TYRES
Gas burner 15in alloys; 175/55/15 front tyres, 195/55/15 rear tyres

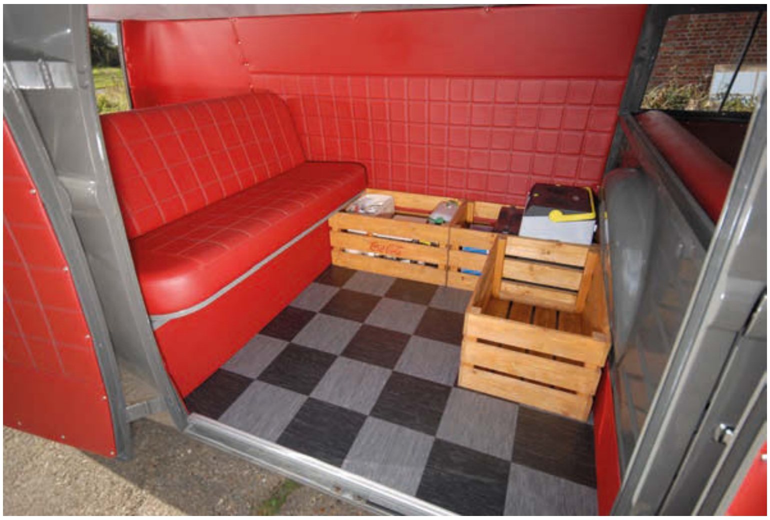


Tony went for a red chequered pattern trim for the door cards and under the dash, a great choice. A custom shifter, chrome grab handle and chrome cup holder are neat additions too

1960 Sharp stereo was a lucky find, still boxed and unused until now

Front bench has been retrimmed in red vinyl which contrasts well with the grey exterior

Overhead airbox had a recent overhaul with new chrome deflectors now in situ



Tony struck a deal with the vendor to have the interior work completed to his own requirements, including a Rusty Lee rock and roll bed. Everything else was kept very simple

Rusty Lee rock and roll bed trimmed to match the rest of the interior is a welcome addition when Tony leaves the T5 at home!

accelerator cable had been cutting into the gearbox casing. This was solved by fitting a cable roller from Butty's Bits – a clever way of keeping the cable away from the gearbox and providing smoother acceleration.

Along for the ride

With the running issues sorted, Tony turned his attention to the suspension which had already been lowered with a 4in narrowed beam and flipped spindles. "There was an annoying knocking sound whilst driving the Van and this was quickly put down to the shock absorbers digging into the front beam," Tony explains, "the correct modified trailing arms were sourced from Transporterhaus, giving enough clearance for the new pair of Spax shocks." Incidentally, the brakes up front have been upgraded to Audi discs with adaptor plates. We weren't able to discover their exact origin, the vehicle came with adaptor plates when he bought it, but they serve to pull the Bus up nicely.

At the same time, Spax adjustable shocks were fitted to the rear and a straight axle conversion carried out to get the Bus sitting how he wanted.

Sharp thinking

Back inside and Tony had managed to get hold of a 1960 Sharp radio, unused and still in its original box. This was promptly installed along with a chrome grab handle and drinks holder while the overhead air box has recently been overhauled with chrome air deflectors.

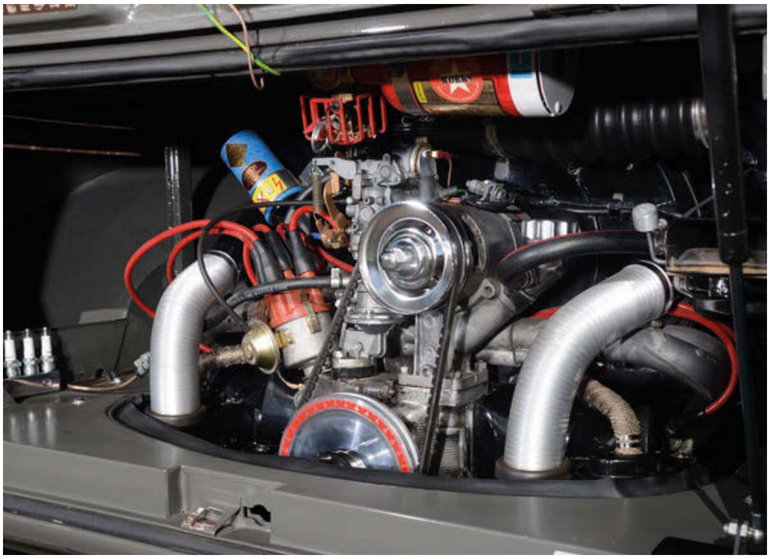
One of the main talking points of Tony's van is the colour and unfortunately he's keeping the paint code to himself as the last thing he wants to find at shows is a brace of matching vans similar to his own. "I had the roof resprayed, the swage lines straightened and a new section of metalwork replaced above the barn doors at a local Ford dealer," Tony recalls, "there was also a dent found in one rear corner that had been repaired with filler so that was redone properly. Reluctantly I had to give them the paint code, which I will say is a VW code. After a few attempts they managed to get the swage lines as straight as I think they'll ever be."

As far as wheel choice went, we think you'll agree that those 15in Gas Burners with 175 tyres up front and 195s at the rear look perfect.

Dial it up

Tony intends to swap the aftermarket chrome wiper blades to black and also fit a set of Smiths clocks for engine oil pressure, oil temperature and fuel level which will feature an oak surround and be located directly under the radio. A custom accelerator pedal has also been made from an old sign and covered in clear skateboard grip tape for a more custom look and Tony's been lucky enough to find a Barndoor mirror arm which will be fitted to the offside of the van as motorway driving is especially tricky in its current format! There are also plans to fit a Creative Engineering rack and pinion steering kit and a few other modifications, such as Safari windows and possibly a simple oak cupboard in the rear. But for now, he's happy to keep things plain and simple... ■

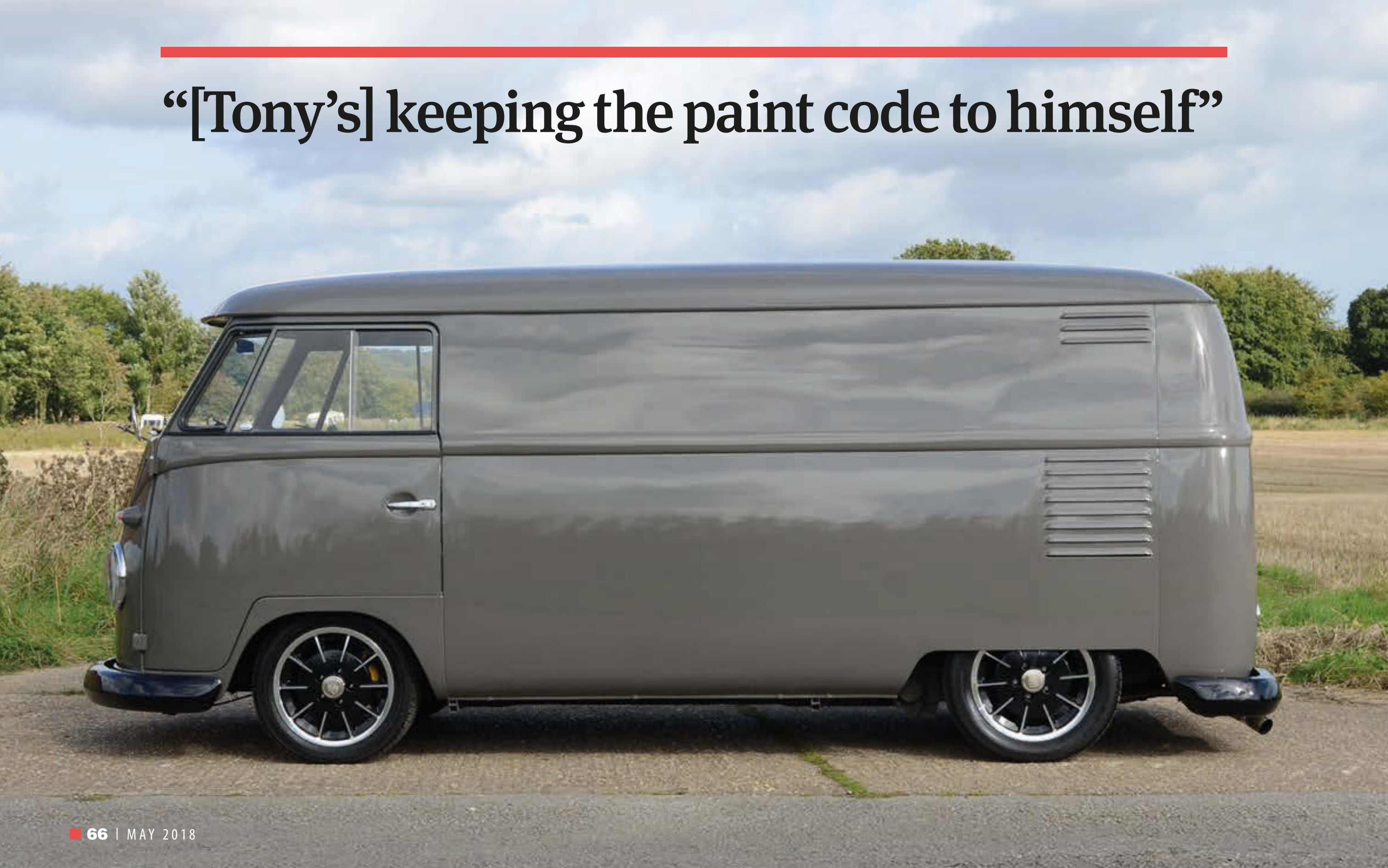
Special thanks to Mark Hart for use of his garage facilities and his employees Connor Wilcox and Adam Seckel for their help working on the van out of hours. Thanks also to Ian Doy for helping me to pick up the van originally and not complaining too much when I nearly rolled it on the first roundabout.



^ Problems with the engine led to a full rebuild at Mark Hart engineering in Bridlington. The 1600 twin port is pretty much stock, which is precisely how Tony likes it

> 15in Gas Burner rims are a perfect choice, while big Audi front discs help out with the stopping power

“[Tony’s] keeping the paint code to himself”



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- 1 x New chrome tailgate handle
- 1 x New chrome engine lid handle
- All working on the same R code keys

Set on one R code key 72-74

S48733

- 2 x New cab door handles & barrels
- 1 x New slide door handle
- 1 x New slide door handle ring
- 1 x New tailgate handle & barrel
- 1 x New engine lid lock & barrel locking
- All locking on the same key
- 1 pair of keys

S23989

Set on one R code key 9/68-71

- 2 x New cab door handles & barrels
- 1 x New slide door handle
- 1 x New slide door handle ring
- 1 x New tailgate handle & barrel
- 1 x New engine lid lock & barrel locking
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Freddy Files 2018

Ninove

The official title may have been Freddy Files 'The Thing Fling' 2018, but to most Brits the event is simply referred to as 'Ninove', the town in Belgium that hosts this great event

Words and photos Paul Knight

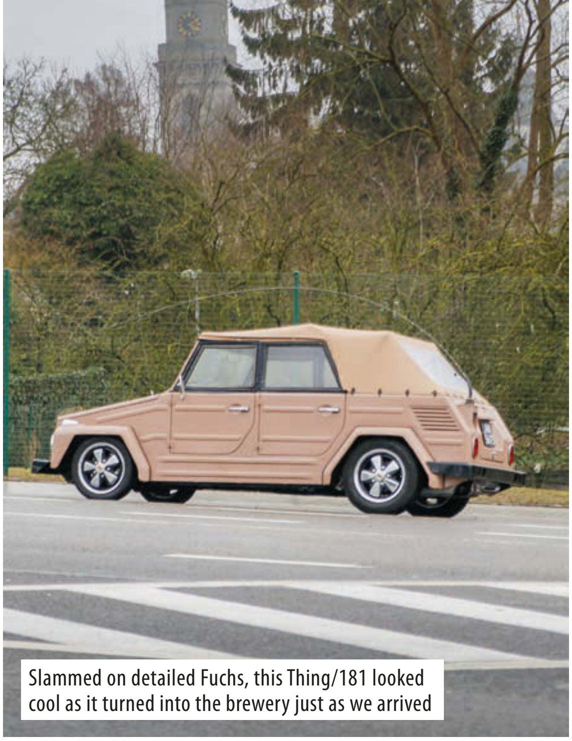
Parked outside the brewery was this Witkap-Pater logo'd Bug (complete with crates of beer on the roof!)

Around the town square there was a good collection of swapmeet stalls and parts traders

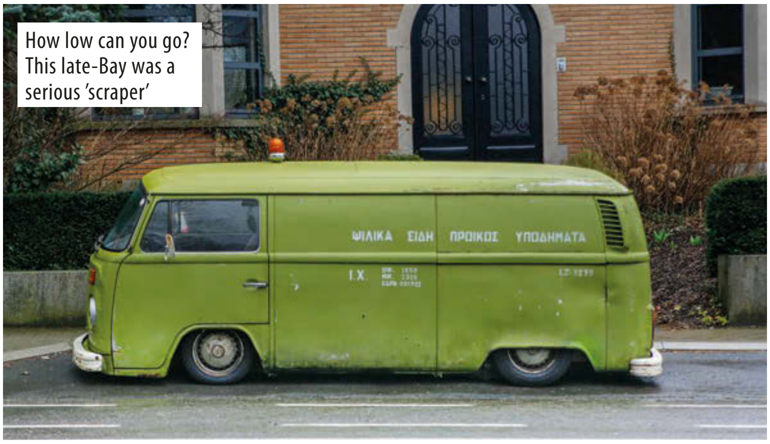
The Deluxe Metalworks-built Country Buggy looked cool even in this wet weather

Parking spaces within the gates of the brewery were filled quickly…

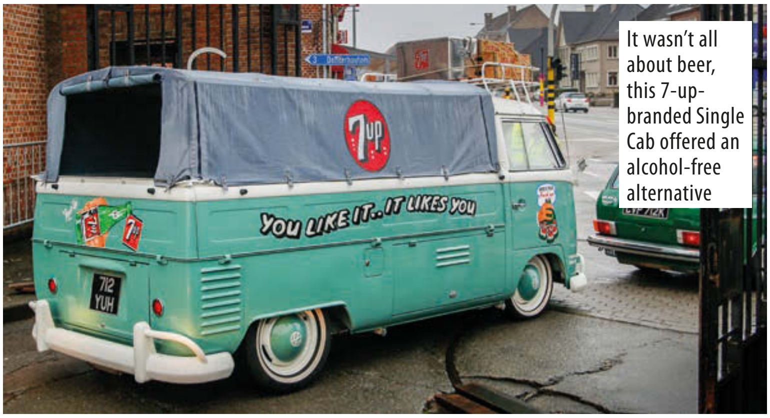
Ninove
drinkt
SLAG
WITKAP PATER



Slammed on detailed Fuchs, this Thing/181 looked cool as it turned into the brewery just as we arrived



How low can you go? This late-Bay was a serious 'scraper'



It wasn't all about beer, this 7-up-branded Single Cab offered an alcohol-free alternative

> "the destination for the Saturday daytime visitors has become the local brewery"

When you roll as low as this, running repairs (such as re-attaching a scraped-off tailpipe) are not uncommon…

Steve 'the northerner' Walker, Steve Gilbert, 'Kinky' Mick Tattersal, Paul 'Puppy' Medhurst (hiding…) and Chris 'Geez' Lambourne were representing the UK scene…

There are two ways to enjoy this event – either as a one-day affair, or as a weekend gathering. The one-day option involves various European VW clubs cruising to Ninove on Sunday where they park up with the hundreds of other air-cooled VWs in the centre of town, and set off home when the event closes at 4pm. The second option is certainly the most popular amongst Brits, as it's fair to say that it's perhaps a little too far to be a one day gathering for us guys (plus there's the lure of a brewery tour and a party night).

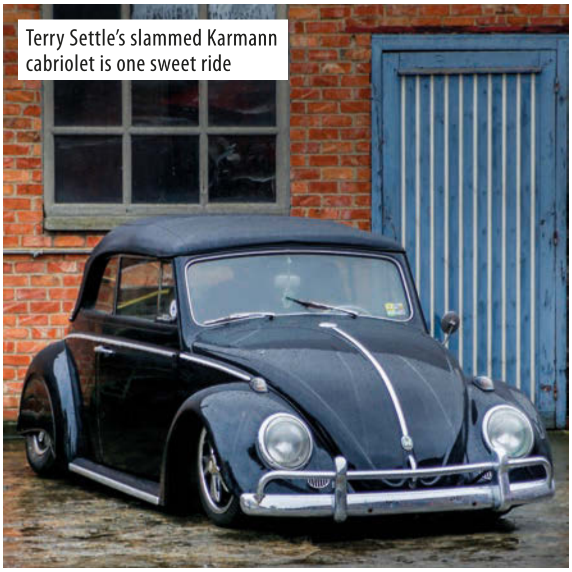
Choose to cruise

There were several UK-based cruises to the event organised by clubs and via social media (search Facebook for details) which all set off bright and early on Saturday 10 March. We were taking the ferry from Dover and were pleasantly surprised to find that the DFDS boat to Dunkirk was fairly quiet. Better still, the high winds we'd experienced a few days earlier had cleared, hence it was 'plain sailing', and a couple of hours later, having docked, we were on the road to Ninove. Incidentally, it's literally one road for all but the last seven miles of the 90-mile trip; hence it's straightforward enough to get there.

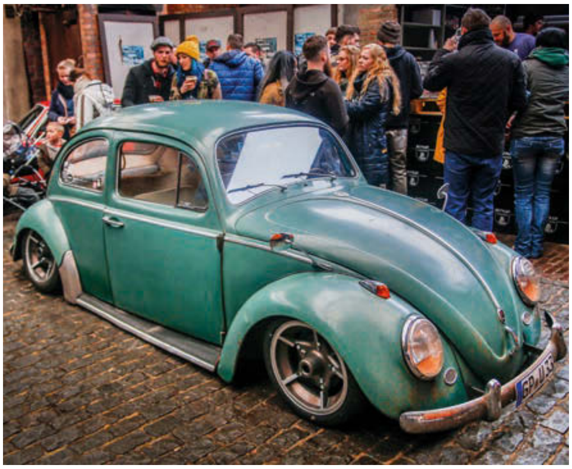
Having spoken to a few first-timers this year, it was clear that not everyone understood quite how this event works. Basically, the show is (and always has been) a one-day affair – the Sunday gathering in the centre of Ninove, organised by Frederic Peeters (hence the Freddy Files title). However, on the Saturday evening there is also an organised meal, and tickets can be purchased online via Freddy's website. In the past, the British contingent has enjoyed the Saturday evening in town, hence things evolved into the two-day affair. Whilst unofficial, when you speak to any Brits at Ninove, they would all tell you that the Saturday is now very much a part of the event. And so, the destination for the Saturday daytime visitors has become the local brewery, which has limited parking, but is an awesome place to hang out and enjoy a local brew whilst checking out some rad rides.

Time for a brewery

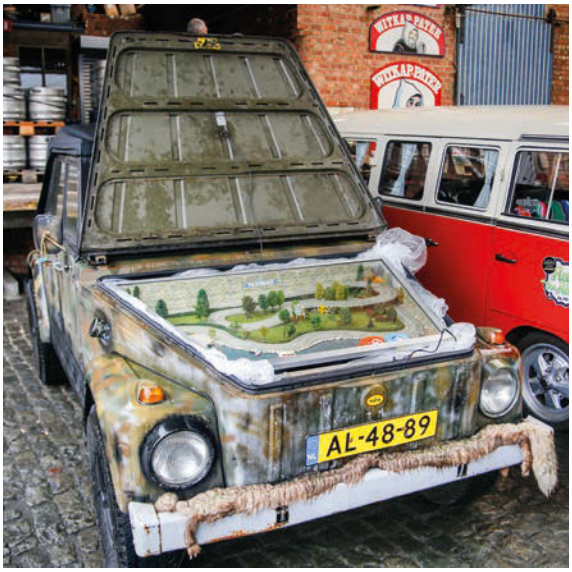
When we arrived at the Slaghmuylder Brewery (home of Witkap beer), located right in the heart of Ninove, we could tell it was going to be busy inside as we had to park quite some

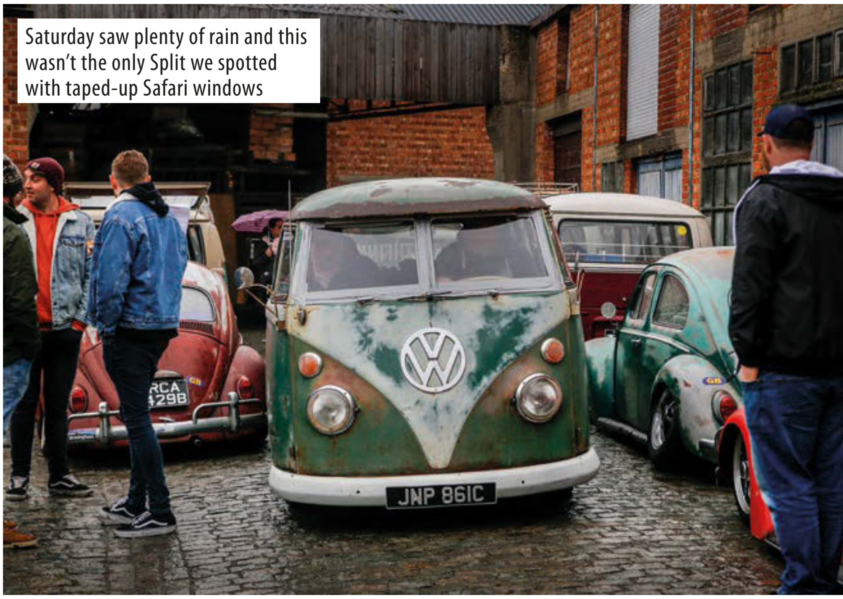

Terry Settle's slammed Karmann cabriolet is one sweet ride

This sweet patina-ride was rolling on a set of super rare, Brazilian-made Titanio Venus rims – simply awesome

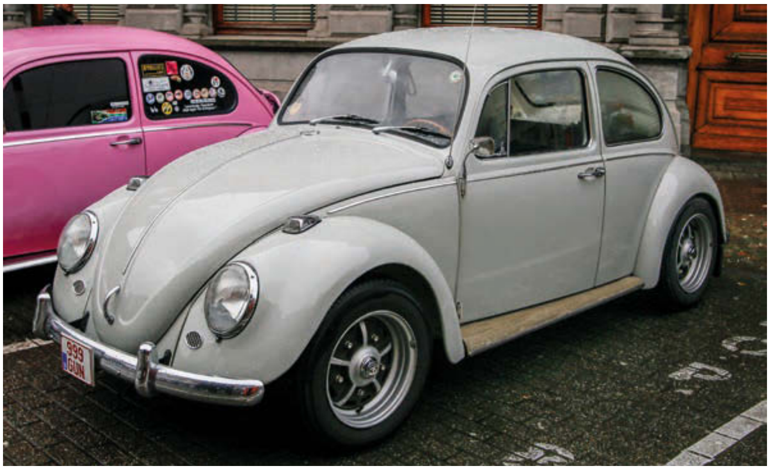


Yes, that's a working model VW diorama/display in the front of a Trekker




Saturday saw plenty of rain and this wasn't the only Split we spotted with taped-up Safari windows

DRINKT
SLAG
LAGER PILS
SOR 27

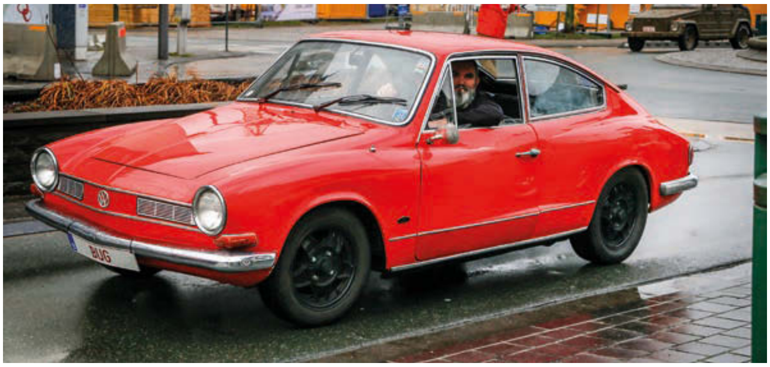


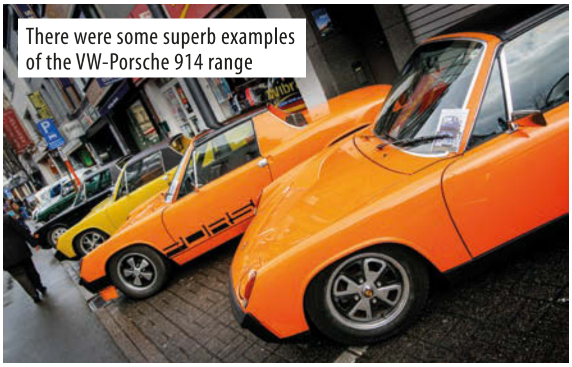
It's cool to see a set of classic Lemmertz/Sprintstar wheels on a car that isn't slammed. This is how a typical '60s European VW might have looked 'back in the day'

This was one of two incredibly rare Karmann Ghia TCs, which were built for the Brazilian VW market only

Okay, it was pretty wet, but we're not sure it was quite surfboard weather!

> it's literally a case of finding a parking space on the streets around town and closing the curtains on your Van





There were some superb examples of the VW-Porsche 914 range

distance away. However, the walk past many cool VWs was great, and as you can see in these photos, the vehicles parked on site were superb! Having watched my passengers enjoy a few beers, I couldn't wait to find a parking spot in town and head out to meet some old friends and enjoy a local beer myself. And this is the part that seemed to confuse the first timers – what to do once they've left the brewery. In short, most people head into town where they either check in at a local hotel or, for Bus owners, find a quiet spot to park up for the night. There's no official camping area or anything like that – it's literally a case of finding a parking space on the streets around town and closing the curtains on your Van.

Of course, Saturday night involved beers, bars and old buddies… oh, and an epic amount of rain! Sunday morning started off damp but by mid morning things had dried up and there were even patches of blue sky. Vehicles began to arrive from around 9am

Freddy Files 2018

Porsche 914 line-up was headed by this rare, 6-cylinder 914-6

It was great to see some superb Cal Look Bugs at Ninove

Genuine Fuchs wheels are becoming hard to find these days but fortunately this guy had plenty to choose from

The 'Thing Fling' brought together some cool examples this year

This collection of vintage Bugs included some of the nicest Oval- and Split-window cars at the event

Raoul Verbeemen's '52 ice cream 'wagen is one of just four bodies built by Belgian coachbuilder, Valkenaers

(official start is 10am), and it wasn't long before the streets were beginning to fill with cool VWs.

Wander-ful 'Thing'

On arrival, air-cooled vehicles that paid to enter the centre of town received their goody pack and were parked up by marshalls. There's a 'no-driving' rule in town until the event ends at 4pm, so it's safe to wander the streets without worrying about traffic. The theme this year was 'the Thing Fling'; hence 181s (Trekkers/Things) were parked up along the entry road, to celebrate the marque. As you can see, there's truly something for everyone at this event – we spotted some awesome vintage rides parked by a collection of superb Cal Lookers… and if Buses or patina rides are your 'thing' (pun intended), then this was VW nirvana!

But, all too soon it was time to head back to Blighty – our awesome adventure may have been over, but we were already planning to return next year. Perhaps we'll see you there?

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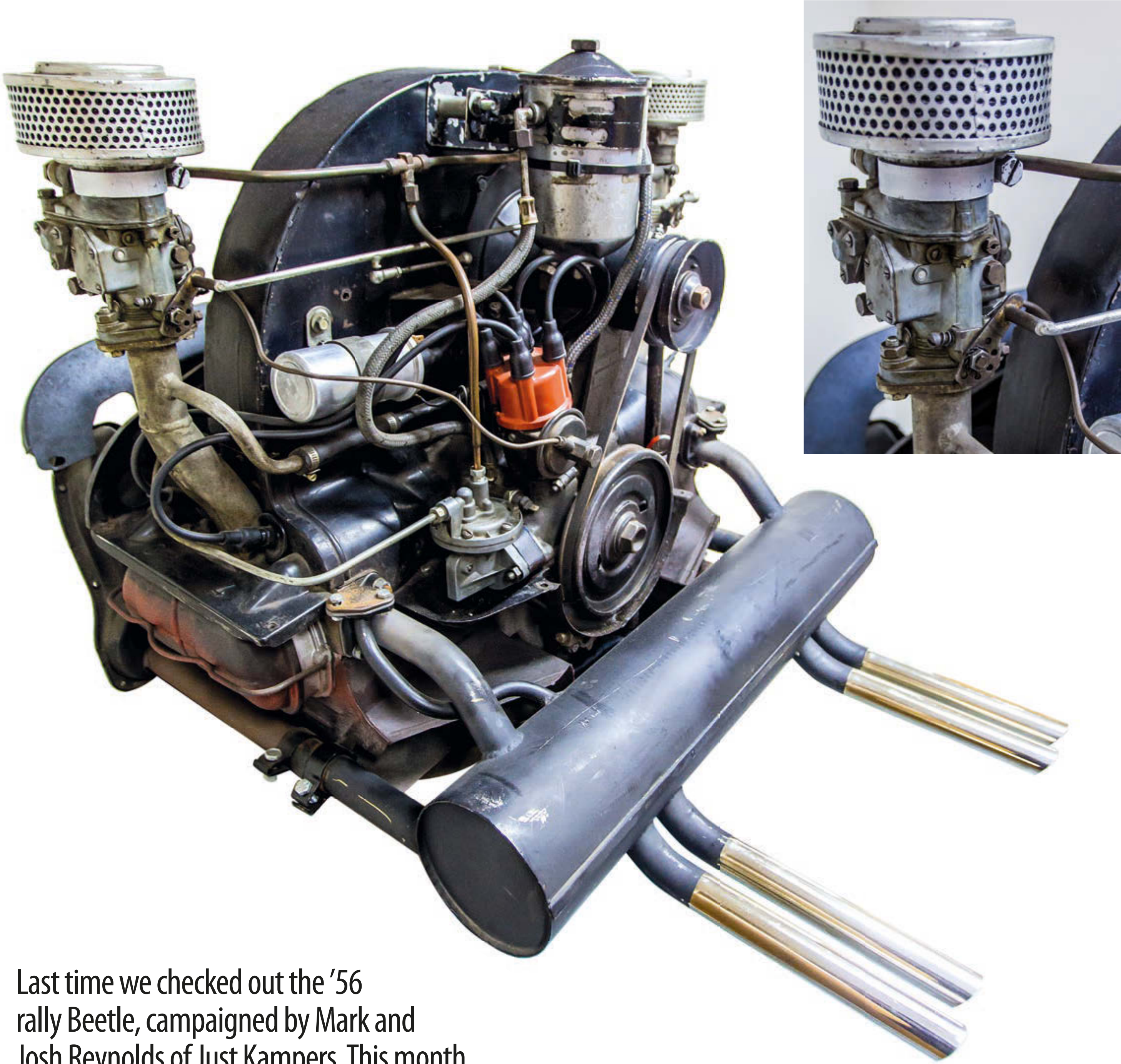
PERIOD POWER

Okrasa TSV 1300/30 engine

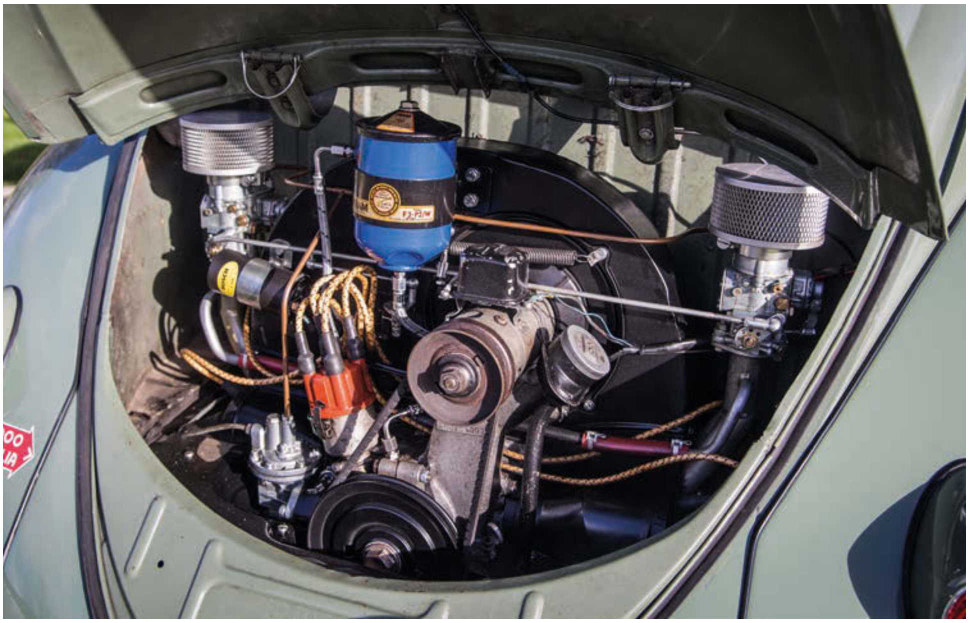
Touring Sport Veloce



Last time we checked out the '56 rally Beetle, campaigned by Mark and Josh Reynolds of Just Kampers. This month we investigate the history behind the Okrasa TSV 1300/30 motor that inspired the 1398cc engine fitted to their Mille Miglia contender

Words Paul Knight **Photos** Paul Knight, *VolksWorld* archives
Original feature *Motor Klassik* magazine (feature text by Hermann Reis and photography by H.D. Seufert) **Translation** Tom Gotta

Okrasa TSV 1300/30 engine



When Mark and Josh Reynolds decided to enter a Beetle in the 2017 Mille Miglia rally, they were faced with the issue of horsepower (or lack of, to be precise). The car they'd picked was a '56 Beetle (see April '18 issue for the full feature), which was originally fitted with a 30hp 1200cc motor. Historic rally regulations are notoriously strict, hence they couldn't just remove the old motor and replace it with a later 1600cc unit. However, closer inspection of the rules revealed that, within reason, period-tuning parts and modifications were permitted, so the guys set about researching tuning options. This inevitably led them to the legendary Okrasa TSV (Touring Sport Veloce) engine kits, which were popular amongst performance fans back in the 1950s and '60s.

However, original Okrasa parts and kits are incredibly hard to find these days and, even if you could track down a pair of Okrasa twin-port heads or even a crankshaft, there's a good chance that they would probably be worn out or damaged. Occasionally NOS parts do crop up but, as we're sure you can imagine, the prices can be insane!

In the USA, Wolfsburg West have actually recreated the key components of the Okrasa kit for 30- and 34hp engines (more on this later…), which was one option available to team JK. However, whilst researching the Okrasa kits, Mark picked up a lead on a complete, turn-key Okrasa motor, which belonged to renowned vintage VW enthusiast and proprietor of BBT in Belgium, Bob Van Heyst.

Bob explained that the engine wasn't for sale *per se*, however he might consider parting with it if he knew it was going to the right home…

The engine in question was a TSV 1300/30 with quite a colourful history. This particular engine was assembled specifically for a magazine story in the late 1980s, where it was fitted to a Bug and compared directly with a 1300cc Porsche 356. As this was long after the original Okrasa engine kits had ceased production, the Oettinger tech team went to great lengths to recreate the original parts, even going as far as having Mahle forge a single (yes, just one!) example of the original 69.5mm crankshaft.

Following the magazine feature, the engine was removed from the Kamei Bug and stored for several years before Bob managed to strike a deal to purchase it. Having only been used for the magazine test it had covered very few miles but Bob decided to strip it down just to check things over and to confirm that it was fitted with the correct Okrasa parts. Happy with what he found inside, the motor was built up and fitted into the rear of the TeufelHeb (BBTs gasser-inspired Hebmüller dragster), which Edwin Jespers then drove to Bad Camberg and back (around 1000km). The TSV 1300 was then removed from the Heb (as Edwin would be racing the car with a hot stroker motor at EBI just a few days later) and stored until such point as Bob had a use for it.

> "I can report that it's certainly quite a performer and a blast to drive!"

A couple of years later it was fitted to Bob's wife's Lowlight Karmann Ghia Cabriolet, which was loaned to Mark and Peggy Merrill, who drove it to the Hessisch Oldendorf vintage VW meet (perhaps another 1000km). However, it was soon removed as Bob had decided to restore the Ghia to factory spec.

Finally, it was fitted to Bob's '58 double-door Bus for a short period, although Bob wasn't happy about the additional load his heavyweight Bus was putting on the rare motor and, after just 500km, he replaced it with a stock 1600cc single port unit. Since then, the Okrasa engine had just been stored at BBT as a 'turn-key' option for any future project Bob had in mind.

Needless to say, Mark loved the sound of this low-mileage Okrasa engine, hence a deal was struck and the motor was delivered to Just Kampers, where it was due to be fitted to the rally Beetle. But, the more Mark thought about the rarity of this motor and the hard life it would endure in the rear of the Bug, the more he felt that he couldn't bring himself to risk breaking it. He told us, "I'd never forgive myself if we'd destroyed the TSV 1300 motor on the rally, hence I decided to have James Calvert at Stateside Tuning assemble a modern interpretation of the Okrasa motor based around one of the new Okrasa-style engine kits from the USA." As we explained last month, the Stateside-built engine performed faultlessly on the rally and, having driven the car myself, I can report that it's certainly quite a performer and a blast to drive!

Therefore – for now at least – the repro motor remains in the back of the rally car, while the original Okrasa TSV 1300/30 has become quite a talking point in the JK museum.

BACK TO '89...

Original feature *Motor Klassik* magazine (feature text by Hermann Reis and photography by H.D. Seufert)
Translation Tom Gotta

The August 1989 issue of *Motor Klassik* magazine ran a cover story based upon the very Okrasa engine that Mark Reynolds had purchased from Bob Van Heyst. It was actually a story regarding the comparison of an Okrasa-tuned Beetle and a 1300cc Porsche 356 – a side-by-side grudge match, if you like.

And so, Jörg Steidlinger took his 1300cc '51 Porsche 356 to the Hockenheim Motodrom on Monday, 19 June 1989 to settle a dispute that had run for more than 30 years… i.e. Could an Okrasa TSV 1300/30-equipped Bug actually outrun a Porsche?

Between '51 and '57, the Porsche 356 could be ordered with either an 1100cc (40PS) or a 1300cc (44PS) motor. This coincided with the introduction of the Okrasa TSV 1300/30 kit, which used a 69.5mm-stroke crankshaft to increase the capacity to 1295cc (using the original 77mm pistons). The increased stroke improved torque, while the all-new, twin-port cylinder heads and dual carburettors allowed the VW motor to rev more freely and increased the horsepower by quite a margin.

Clearly things were close and, as you can probably imagine, Okrasa-powered VW owners had bragged about outrunning Porsches for many years… but now it was time to find out once and for all if the humble VW could be fitted with an 'off-the-shelf' engine kit that would outrun a Porsche and still prove to be just as reliable as a stock motor.

Therefore Okrasa's Gerhard Oettinger and his son-in-law, Gert Scholl (who would be driving the car), stepped up to the mark by assembling a 'new' TSV 1300/30 engine, which was fitted to a Split Window Beetle. Incidentally, the Bug belonged to Kamei (suppliers of styling accessories), hence Kamei proprietor, Uwe Meier-Andrae and his press officer, Hans-Joachim Klersy were also on site to find out how the underdog would perform in this epic showdown.

According to the feature, the Bug was fitted with a number of Kamei accessories including snake-print seat covers, an ashtray on the gear lever, an arm rest, a foot rest, air-deflectors on the quarter lights and, of course, that wild experimental front spoiler, which was made from aluminium and referred to as the 'Tiefensteuer' (which translates as 'Depth Control').

The Bug is still owned by Kamei and is now part of their historic collection.

Both cars were fitted with Peiseler wheels, which would measure acceleration etc, and the day included a large number of trials covering in-gear acceleration, static and rolling starts and even accelerating from 0-100km/h in fourth gear only.

However, there are some key issues that flag up via the feature, not least of which being the fact that the Porsche appeared to have been updated with a later, full-synchromesh transmission at some point (remember, it was a 38-year old car…), while the Bug was still running the original, non-synchro gearbox (thereby Scholl had to double de-clutch during testing, while the Porsche could be shifted as per a modern car). However, team Porsche also pointed out that the car was not running as it should and was popping and misfiring in some tests… clearly this comparison wasn't going to be as 'clean cut' as some may have hoped.

With this in mind, there's no real point in listing each and every result. However, it was noted that Scholl was 100% focussed on driving this Bug just about as hard as he could, which is perhaps why it went on to out perform the (spluttering) Porsche!

The cars were taken to a dyno where it was clear that there were some issues with the Porsche, which achieved just 36hp. The coil was changed, new ignition points were fitted and the ignition timing was adjusted but the mechanics couldn't clear the fault in the short period of time they had. It's possible that some carburettor tuning could

Motor Klassik
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Forever young

Das Duell: VW-Käfer Okrasa gegen Porsche 356/1300.

Special thanks to Tom Gotta for translating the original feature content for us. If you'd like to see more, a pdf of the feature can be found on the Just Kampers blog at www.justkampers.com

ABOUT OKRASA...

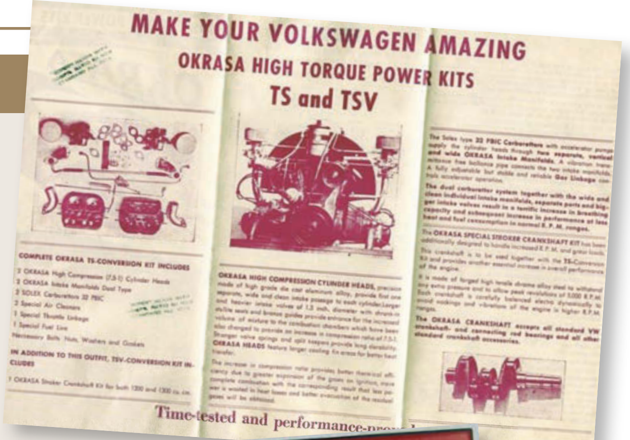
Oettinger Kraftfahrtechnische Spezial Anstalt (later abbreviated to 'Okrasa') was the name of the business founded by Gerhard Oettinger in 1951, which specialised in the production and development of high-performance parts for VW engines. Before long, coachbuilders such as Rometsch and Dannenhauer and Stauss had adopted the Okrasa brand as the Porsche-like performance added the element of sportiness, which was lacking with the stock VW powerplant.

There were various tuning options available over the years, some using single port heads but with dual carburettors and others with dual port heads and chromoly long-stroke crankshafts. For instance, you could purchase a TS 1200 kit, which consisted of a pair of twin-port cylinder heads (machined to raise the compression ratio from 6.6:1 to 7.5:1) with matching manifolds fitted with Solex 32PBIC carburettors (as per the early Porsche 356 range) and Knecht air filters. There was also an optional oil cooler and a Fram oil filter kit to mount on the front of the fanhousing (or in the side of the engine bay in some kit cars).

Then there was the TSV 1300/30 (as featured in this article), which was based on the TS 1200 kit (heads and carbs) but was a more complete option as it included a chromoly 69.5mm crankshaft with an 8-dowelled flywheel. There was some internal clearancing required to allow the rods to clear the camshaft, and spacers were required beneath the barrels, but the longer stroke resulted in a capacity of 1295cc and a decent increase in power.

In 1956 Empi began to advertise Okrasa kits in the USA claiming that they raised power from 36hp to 48bhp and cut an amazing 12-seconds off the 0-60 time!

Oettinger went on to develop kits for later engines and still build and develop performance VW engines today. However, the vintage Okrasa-branded air-cooled kits haven't been available since the '60s.



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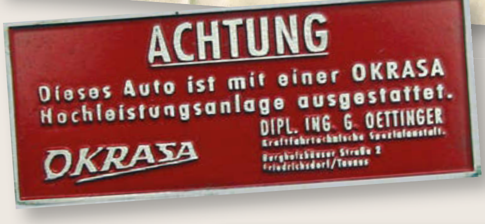
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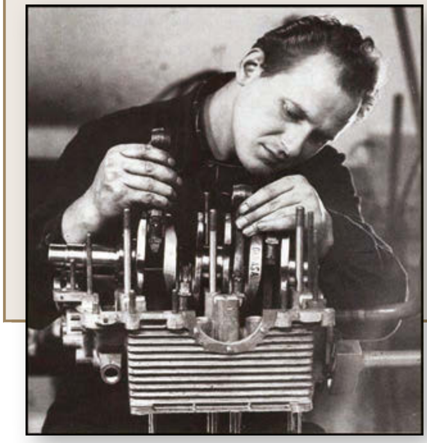
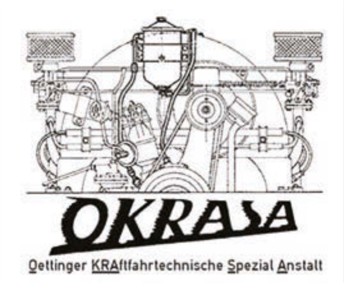




Das Bild trügt: Im *Motor Klassik*-Test war der Käfer der Jäger, der Porsche der Gejagte...

Motor Klassik 8/1989

13

have improved the performance, but it was too late for the Porsche to prove itself by this point, and Jörg admitted defeat.

In case you were wondering, the Bug was also tested on the dyno and, despite suffering some wheel shake (due to unbalanced rear wheels and tyres), it produced a healthy 46hp.

But, could the Porsche have outperformed the Bug if it had been in peak condition? Well, this is a tough call, but the feature did cover some basic facts and figures based upon existing performance data for the 1300cc Porsche and Oettinger's own testing/results. It seems that the Porsche should be capable of hitting 100km/h (0-62mph) in 19 seconds, which is 1-second quicker than the Bug had managed that day. However, according to Oettinger's previous testing, a Beetle equipped with the TSV 1300/30 would hit 100km/h in 18-seconds (and some cars tested had managed 17-seconds).

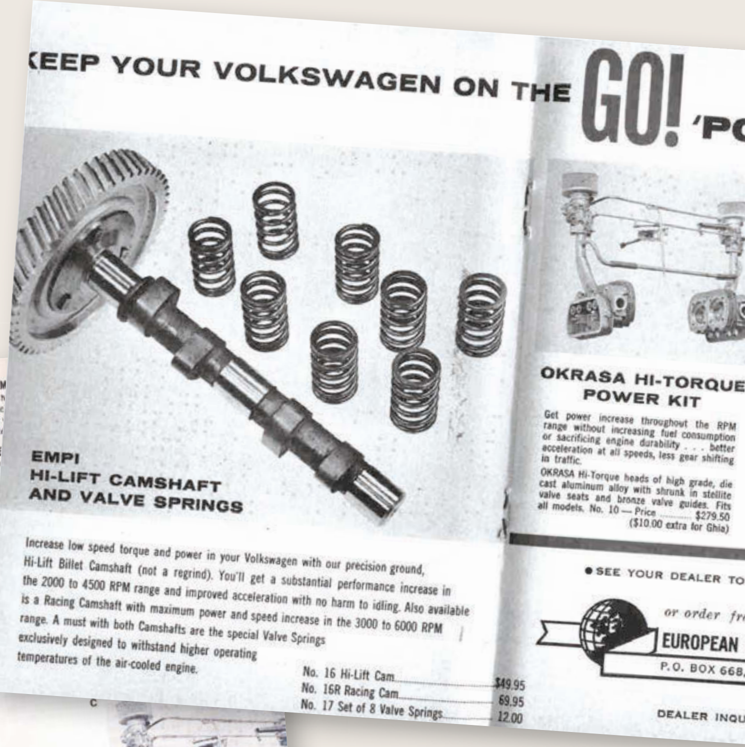
And then there's the top-speed comparison. On paper, the aerodynamic Porsche was capable of hitting 155km/h, while the Bug was listed at just 128km/h – yet on the day of testing, the Bug proved to be more capable in practically every aspect.

Sadly this 'showdown' did not provide the definitive conclusion everyone had hoped for. However, it seemed that the author had concluded that, in perfect like-for-like conditions, the Porsche might have excelled at higher speeds however, if the pair had raced away from a stoplight, then the Okrasa-powered Bug would probably have left the Porsche in its dust!

ADVERTISING OKRASA

Okrasa TSV engine kits and Okrasa tuning components were popular in Europe for many years, however it was the smart marketing of companies such as Empi in the USA that brought the potential of the Okrasa twin-port cylinder heads, crankshafts and dual carb kits to a whole new market. Sometimes branded as Empi kits and sometimes as Okrasa, the adverts promised one thing – Power!

Here's a selection of both European and US-market adverts used in various tuning magazines through the '50s and '60s.



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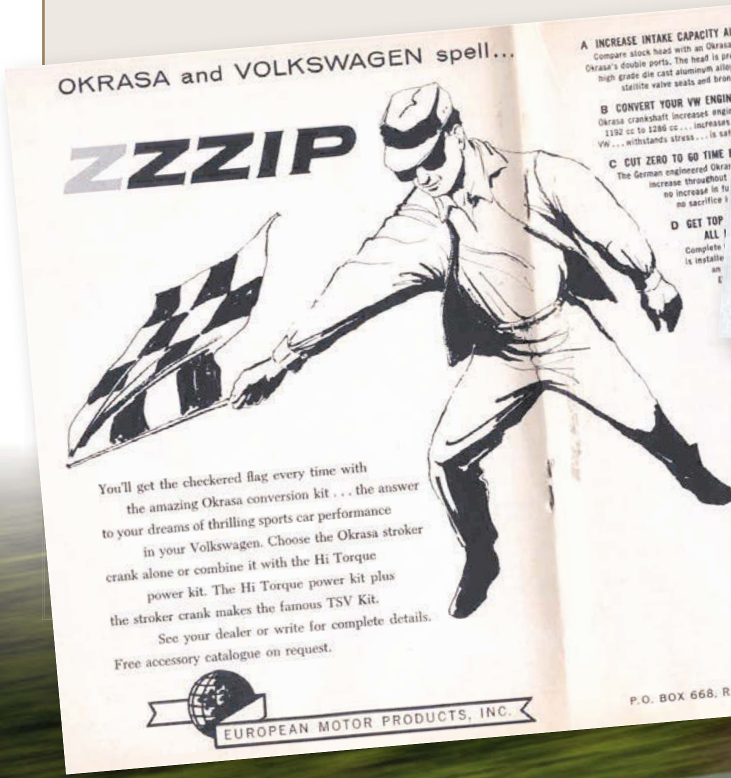

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B CONVERT YOUR VW ENGINE
Okrasa crankshaft increases engine
1192 cc to 1286 cc . . . increases
VW . . . withstands stress . . . is saf

C CUT ZERO TO 60 TIME
The German engineered Okras
increase throughout
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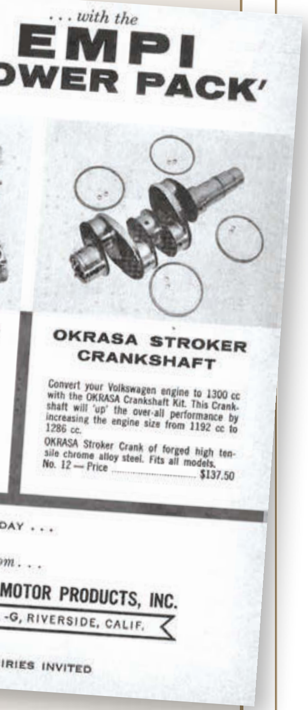

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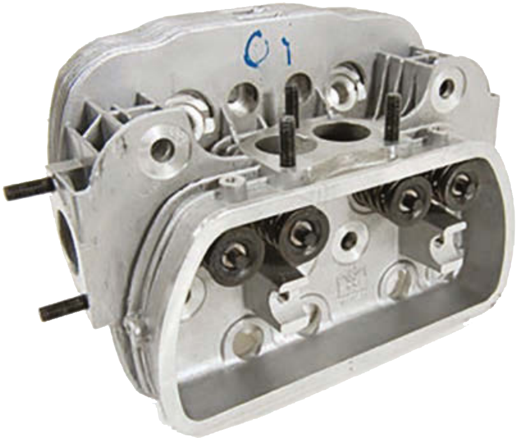
IRIES INVITED

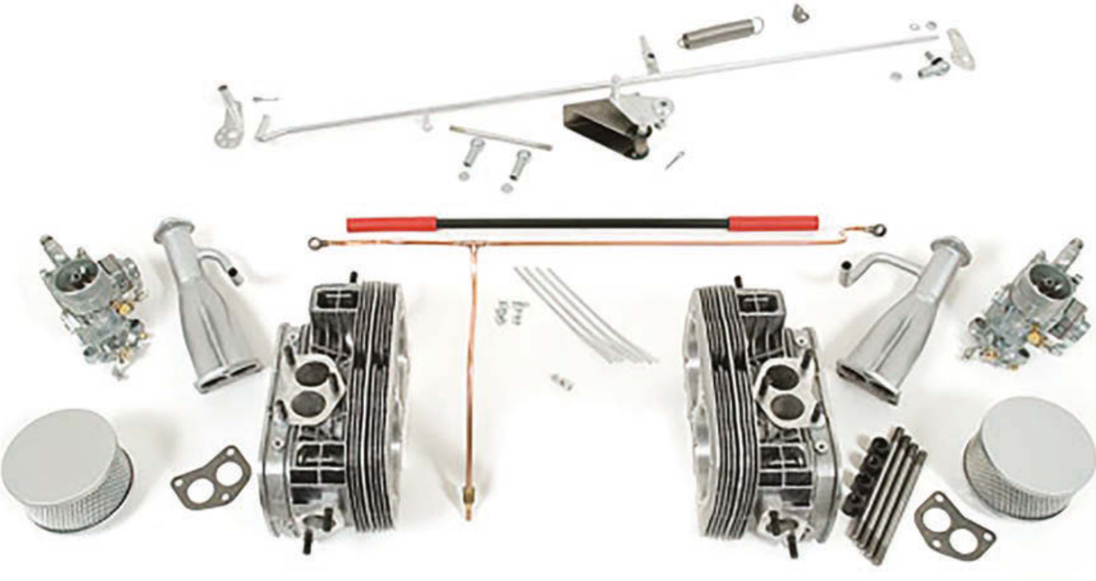
NEW ENGINE KITS / THE JK RALLY CAR ENGINE – RECREATING THE LEGEND...



Wolfsburg West in the USA has developed its own take on the legendary Okrasa dual-port cylinder heads / twin carb kit by Okrasa, which has opened up a whole world of Oldspeed tuning to owners of classic VWs. The Just Kampers crew were so impressed with the performance of the Stateside Tuning-built replica motor (which included the WW dual carb / twin port head kit) that they have added it to their range of engine parts (with a choice of linkage options).

You can order the kits by calling 0345 1266 266 or by logging on to www.justkampers.com and the part numbers and prices are as follows:
J42411 Okrasa Engine With Original Style Linkage – £1547.25
J42412 Okrasa Engine With CSP Linkage – £1547.25

Incidentally, there are longer stroke crankshafts (such as the DPR 69.5mm crank), reground camshafts and larger barrels and pistons (80mm) available for the 30hp motor should you want to go 'full-on'. The 1398cc motor in the JK rally Bug was assembled by James Calvert who can be contacted on 01608 812 438 www.statesidetuning.co.uk



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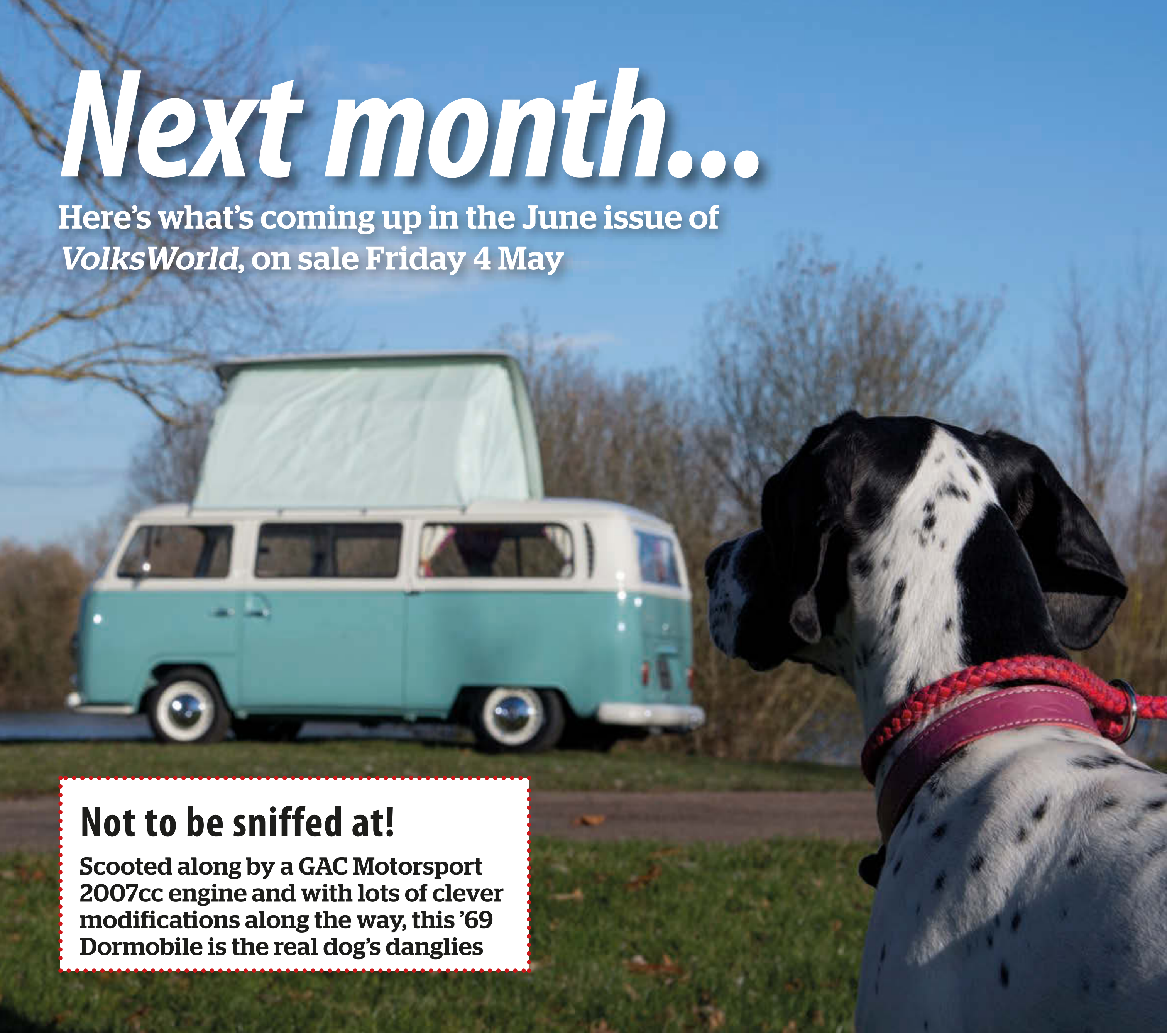
Here's what's coming up in the June issue of *VolksWorld*, on sale Friday 4 May



Not to be sniffed at!

Scooted along by a GAC Motorsport 2007cc engine and with lots of clever modifications along the way, this '69 Dormobile is the real dog's danglies

VolksWorld Show 2018

We'll have all the highlights from Sandown Park

We loved the '80s

If you weren't there, this is what you missed

How to…

Our step-by-step guide to renovating steel wheels

VOLKS WORLD

Don't miss it!

Mount pleasant?

Fed up with that annoying judder every time you accelerate or come off the throttle? Well, in that case it's time to replace your gearbox mounts

Words and photos Mark Walker

JOB INFO

TOOLS USED
Trolley jack; axle stands; 17 or 19mm socket for wheel bolts; 27mm socket; breaker bar; ratchet; 13mm spanner and socket; 8, 15 and 17mm spanner; crosshead screwdriver; flat screwdriver; side cutters/pliers

SKILL LEVEL
4

TIME TAKEN
4-6 hours

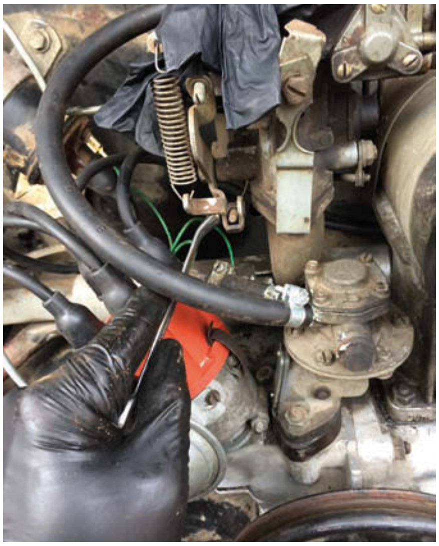
COST DIY
£40 for parts and materials

COST PRO
£200 approx parts and labour

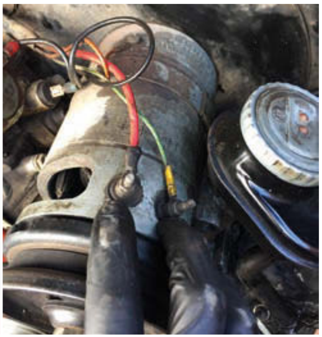
A loud knock or judder when accelerating, decelerating or letting off the clutch can signify all is not well with your gearbox mounts. So, whether you're restoring or recommissioning a car that has been off the road for a while, or you're removing the engine as part of another job, it is well worth taking the extra time to change them.

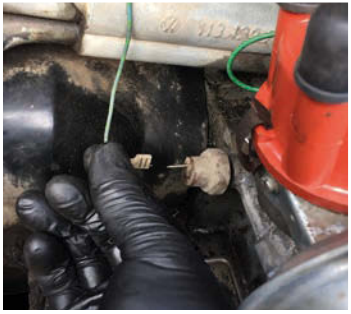
The Karmann Ghia pictured had been off the road for 18 years, so we changed the mounts as a matter of course to get it roadworthy. Here's how to change yours, plus a few other jobs to do while you are at it... ■

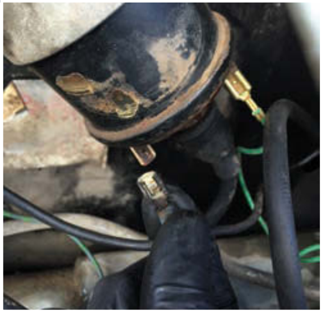
01 **JACK UP CAR, SECURE WITH STANDS** With the car on level ground, loosen the rear wheel bolts. With factory wheels you'll need a 19mm socket. Now jack up the rear and place axle stands under the torsion bars at each rear corner. With the car safely and securely in the air, do a visual inspection of the rear axle gaiters. If they look perished or are split and oily you should replace them whilst the gearbox oil is drained. Also check the rear brake backing plates for oily deposits, as these are a sure sign that a rear hub oil seal is leaking, or that all is not well with the rear wheel cylinders. Now Remove the rear wheels.



02 **REMOVE ENGINE – PART 1** The Ghia already had its engine removed, so our job was much quicker. Here's the process showing a Beetle, it's similar for all type 1-engined cars. Engine removal and refitting is a 'How to' in itself, but we will give you a potted guide here. First, undo the battery earth clamp then take an 8mm spanner and a pair of pliers and undo the bolt holding the accelerator cable to the side of the carburettor – this is often forgotten until the engine is half way out, so it's best to get it out of the way first. Next, remove the fan belt: take a 21mm socket on a breaker bar and attach to the nut on the top pulley. Insert a large screwdriver into the slot on the pulley and use it to lever against. When the nut is loose, remove the nut, spacer, pulley and shims and set to one side in the order you took them off. Now unhook the fan belt from the lower pulley and set aside.



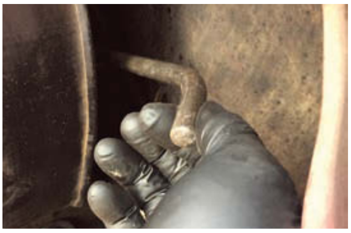




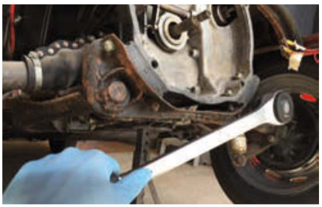
03 **REMOVE ENGINE – PART 2** With the fan belt removed, you can now remove the cardboard air hoses and unscrew the rear tinware – use a large flat-bladed screwdriver that fits well into the slotted heads, or you risk rounding them off. If the screws are stubborn, use penetrating fluid or one of the rust-off type freezing sprays. As a last resort, you can gently use a blowlamp to heat up the screws – keep the flame angled away from the engine case at all times. In the engine bay, use an 8mm spanner to remove the nuts holding the DF and D+ wires to the dynamo. Then use a crosshead screwdriver to remove the brown earth wire. Your wiring will be different if you have an alternator, but just take pictures before you disconnect anything, so you have a record of how everything goes. With the charging wires removed, now remove the rest of the wires – choke, cutoff solenoid, coil feed, oil pressure switch. Open up the tags on the fan housing to remove the wiring loom and place all the wires so they run out of the side of the engine bay.

04 **REMOVE ENGINE – PART 3** With everything undone in the engine bay, move under the car. Put on some safety glasses first, as there is a high likelihood of getting dirt in your eyes at this point. Start by clamping off and remove the fuel line from the metal tube that goes through the tinware; this is my least favourite job on any air-cooled VW, due to the likelihood of getting a face full of petrol. Most people neglect to change this pipe, so they are often brittle and may just disintegrate on removal. Take this opportunity to fit a replacement Ethanol resistant Bio-fuel hose. Now remove the hose clip with a screwdriver or a 7mm socket. With the clip loose, make sure you have your mouth closed as you pull the fuel line off. In my experience, a high proportion of old VWs don't have the heater cables attached and functioning.

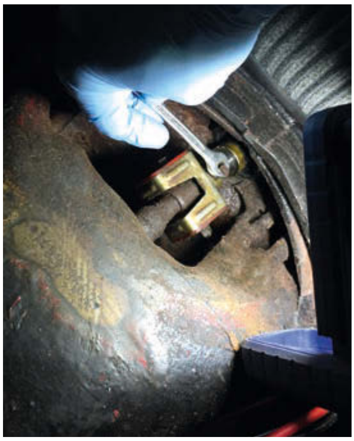
Change gearbox mounts



05 **REMOVE ENGINE – PART 4** Okay, now you have everything disconnected you can remove the engine. Put a trolley jack with a wood block on it under the oil strainer plate and jack it up enough to just put a slight amount of tension on the engine. Reach behind the fan housing and remove the two 17mm nuts (non doghouse cooling) or the single 17mm nut from the starter bolt and single 17mm bolt from underneath (doghouse cooling). These can be a pain to see and remove – I made a special tool years ago, by welding an old Beetle jack handle to a 17mm spanner, which works a treat for loosening stubborn bolts. With the upper bolts removed, now remove the lower two 17mm nuts (usually covered in oil and dirt). The engine is now ready to be pulled out and lowered down on the jack. You may need to raise or lower the jack a little as you wobble the engine free. Once you have the engine off the gearbox, you'll need to carefully lower it. This is hard due to space issues on the Beetle and is even worse on a Ghia, but take your time and you'll manage it. With the engine out, you'll need to raise the car high enough to pull the engine clear, unless you have a pre '72 bus, which has a removeable rear apron.

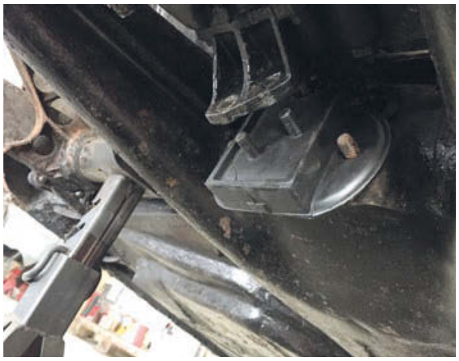


06 **LOOSEN GEARBOX MOUNTS** Before you start undoing anything, it is prudent to give the area a good clean. There will likely be years of accumulated oil, grit and dirt, which will obscure the bolts and make the job a filthy one, so scrape it all off and use degreaser to clean it all up. You can now loosen the gearbox mounts. Take a 27mm socket and large breaker bar and loosen the 27mm bolts that hold the gearbox cradle to the frame horns. As you can see, someone had messed up the thread on one of ours and welded it into position. This was a lot of fun to remedy, involving a finger grinder, an M18x1.5 tap and a good used bolt from my stash. If your threads are in any way compromised, get hold of a thread tap and do the job properly. Now loosen the four 13mm nuts inside the gearbox bellhousing and the four 13mm nuts and bolts from inside the cradle then move to the front gearbox mount and loosen all nuts – these are often either 15mm, 17mm, or whatever sized M10 nuts someone had lying around when it was last apart.

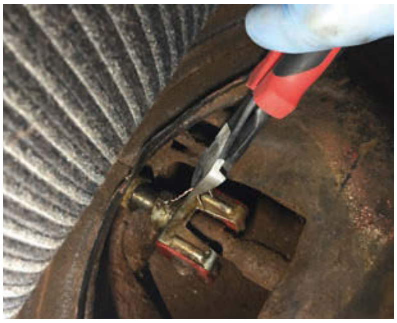


07 **UNDO GEAR LINKAGE/CLUTCH CABLE** You can now undo the gear linkage from inside the car. Lift up the rear seat and remove the crosshead screw that holds the access panel in place. You will see the rear gear linkage coupler. Yours will look different to this if you have an early car, but for the purposes of this job, removal is the same. Cut off the locking wire (if present) and remove the square headed 8mm bolt from the rear end of the coupler – this will loosen the gear selector rod on the gearbox. Now undo the clutch cable wingnut. Firstly, give the threads a clean up with a small wire brush, then spray on some WD40 and leave it to work for a while.

Measure the threads aft of the wingnut and make a note if you are happy with your clutch adjustment – this will make it easier upon re-assembly. Now you can attach some mole grips to the ferrule on the cable (just in front of the threaded portion) and unwind the cable; it's tough on your fingers to get started – it may help to deflect the clutch lever on the gearbox a little.



08 **REMOVE AXLE TUBES/ REPLACE FRONT MOUNT** It is just possible on some cars to skip this step and use a large lever to get the old front gearbox mount out and the new one in, but it's better to undo the axle tubes. They are held in place by three 19mm nuts and bolts per side (Beetle, Ghia and Type 3) and four 17mm bolts with locking tabs (early Bus). Once removed, be very careful of springplate tension as you remove the axle tubes; I had by thumb broken by a Beetle springplate falling off the stop a few years ago. With the bolts removed, you will need to undo the handbrake cables inside the car – usually 11mm nuts, so that they don't prevent the gearbox from being pulled back. Again, measure the visible threads to ensure you get the correct adjustment upon re-assembly. Pull the axles off the springplates as far as they will go. With the axles loose, you can now put a trolley jack under the gearbox. Jack up a small amount and rock the gearbox to try and remove it from the front mounting point. You should be able to pull it back enough to replace the front gearbox mount. Refit the nuts onto the new mount, but don't tighten anything yet.



09 RE-ATTACH GEAR LINKAGE/ CHANGE REAR COUPLER If your gear linkage is at all suspect, now is the perfect time to replace the rear coupler. Here's what's involved:

On pre-1967 cars... Cut off locking wire and remove. Undo both 8mm grub screws. Select second or fourth gear to pull the front shift rod forwards, giving space to remove and replace the coupler. When installing the new one, line up the holes with the indents in the shift rods before fitting and tightening the grub screws. Replace the locking wire and you are done.

1968 and later cars: Cut off and remove locking wire. Undo the 8mm grub screw at the rear of the coupler. At the side of the coupler there is an 8mm screw, remove this and you will be able to draw out the tube that runs through the shift rod and both rubber/plastic bushes. It can be fiddly as the access hole is pretty small. Select second or fourth gear, which will pull the front shift rod forwards to enable removal and replacement of the coupler.

10 CHANGE REAR GEARBOX MOUNTS With the jack still under the gearbox, you can now fit the new rear mounts. The rear mounts pictured were used until 1972, when they were changed for a different design. On the early type pictured, you will need to attach the mounts to the gearbox bellhousing first, then attach the cradle bolts afterwards. Fit everything loosely for now. Once you have the rear mounts and cradle attached, you can thread in the 27mm bolts. These can be quite tricky to get started – you may need to raise or lower the gearbox and/or move it side to side. I added some copper-based grease to ensure they don't seize in future. Tighten down the 27mm nuts first, then do up the front mount nuts and finally the rear mount nuts. This procedure ensures you aren't putting the new mounts under strain – the rear ones need to be done last, as their position is adjustable, so let them find their position first, by tightening the large bolts and the front mount.

11 RE-ASSEMBLY With the new mounts fitted and everything tightened, you can now refit the axle tubes, clutch cable and handbrake cables. This is where your measurements from earlier will come in handy, so you can get the correct clutch and handbrake adjustment first time. If you need to adjust, the correct clutch adjustment means you should feel around 1in (25mm) of free play at the clutch pedal. To correctly adjust the handbrake, ensure your brakes are adjusted correctly, then pull the handbrake up 3-4 notches and adjust the cables until it locks both wheels solidly. Always let the handbrake off and check your wheels still turn with a very light drag.

12 RE-FIT ENGINE You can now re-fit the engine. Jack it into position and get the lower engine studs lined up with the holes in the gearbox bellhousing. When you can insert the studs into these holes, get under the car and check the relative position of the gearbox and engine mating flanges before proceeding – they need to be parallel to each other, or the engine will not slide in. Before you go any further, insert the accelerator cable into the peashooter guide tube. You will still need to rock the engine a bit for it to slide into position, but if the flanges are parallel it will be much easier. With the engine slid into position, it's simply a matter of fitting the 17mm nuts/bolts before you lower the jack down. With this done, you can re-attach the fuel line, electrics, tinware and accelerator cable. When it comes to the fan belt, add or remove shims until you can deflect the belt ¾in with medium pressure, or turn it by 90 degrees with your fingers. Re-attach the battery earth clamp and you are done!

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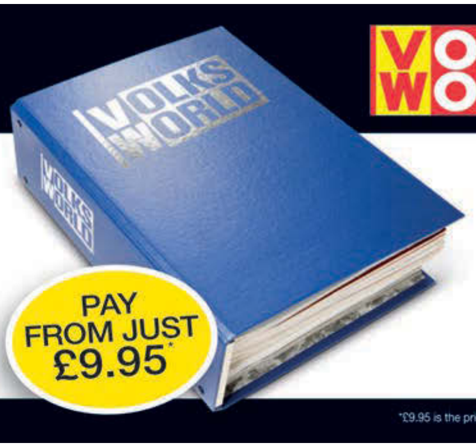

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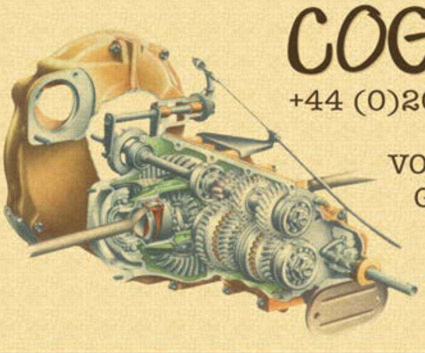

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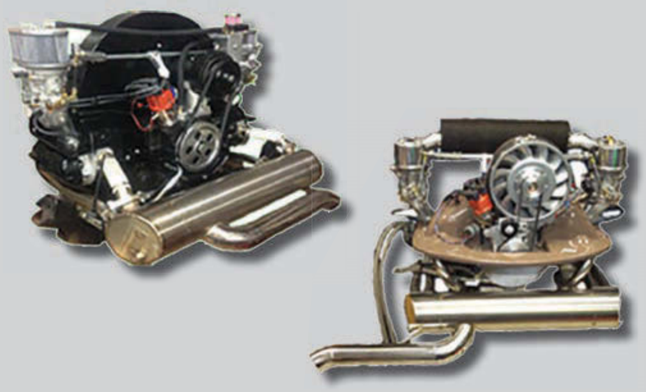

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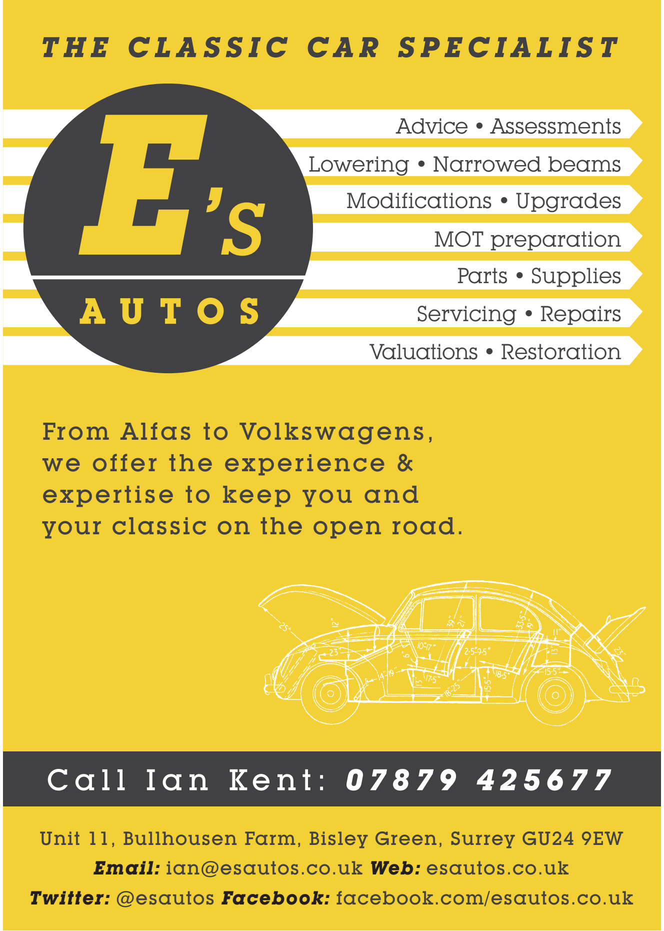

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GOLF CL

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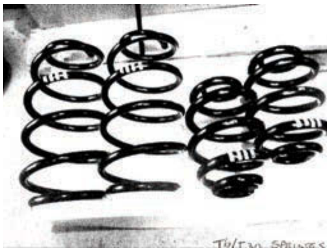

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2012 VW T2 Rio, 41,085 miles, 1.4 petrol water-cooled manual, finished in White over Orange with Premium Wooden units and has a spacious double bed, 2 burner gas hob, gas grill & oven, fridge freezer, stainless steel sink with electrically pumped water, camping leisure battery, 240v mains hook up, underseal anti-corrosion treatment, heated windscreen, heated rear window, CD radio, raising roof and much more. **£32,995** Ref: HRW.

2011 VW T2 Danbury Diamond, 1.4 Petrol, 27,600 miles, spacious double bed, 2 burner gas hob, gas grill, fridge freezer, stainless steel sink with electrically pumped water, camping leisure battery, underseal anti-corrosion treatment, CD radio with MP3 Capacity, raising roof with roof bed, alloy wheels and much more. **£39,995.** Ref: 3206.

2014 VW T2 Danbury Diamond 5 seat SE, 51,815 miles, 1.4 water-cooled petrol engine, 2 burner hob, grill, sink, fridge/freezer, leisure battery, 240v mains hook up, CD radio, raising roof and roof-bed to make 4 berth & much more. Ref: HEV.

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1972 VW T2, 101,886 miles, 1.6 air-cooled engine, authentic RHD Westfalia Conversion, fantastic condition throughout. Raising roof w roof-bed, sink & 4 belted seats. **£29,995.** Ref: 327k.

2015 VW T2 Danbury Rio, 1.4 water-cooled petrol, 3,123 miles, 2 burner gas hob, gas grill, fridge freezer, stainless steel sink with electrically pumped water, camping leisure battery, heated rear window, CD radio, raising roof and much more. **£49,995.** Ref: 3204.

2012 VW T2 Rio, 58,591 miles, 1.4 petrol water-cooled manual, finished in White over Green and benefits from an economical, water-cooled, petrol engine, spacious double bed & roof bed, 2 burner gas hob, gas grill, gas oven, fridge freezer, stainless steel sink with electrically pumped water, camping leisure battery, 240v mains hook up, underseal anti-corrosion treatment, heated windscreen, heated rear window, CD radio, raising roof and much more. **£35,495.** Ref: TKY.

2010 VW T2 Rio 32,088 miles, 1.4 petrol water-cooled manual, finished in White over Mocha and benefits from an economical, water-cooled petrol engine, spacious double bed, 2 burner gas hob, gas grill & oven, fridge freezer, stainless steel sink with electrically pumped water, camping leisure battery, underseal anti-corrosion treatment, 240v mains hook up, raising roof with roof bed, sun roof, roof-mounted flat-screen TV, awning, CD radio and much more. **£32,995.** Ref: ELW.

2015 VW T2 Diamond only 2,568 miles, 1.4 petrol water-cooled manual, finished in White over Bronze with Premium Wooden units, speckled cube flooring and full black leather upholstery. It also features a buddy camping seat, a wooden/alloy steering wheel, a roof bed to make 4 berth, chrome bumpers/mirrors/headlamp rims, rear-mounted spare wheel carrier with colour-coded locking wheel case, front-mounted dummy wheel cover, Cat 1 alarm and much more. **£48,995.** Ref: DNX.

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Taking to the Country

Former *VW Motoring* editor Robin Wager reminisces over one of the wildest VWs of all time

What do you think?

Got something you'd like to share with us? – email volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

Most of us will have come across the oddities produced over the years in the name of Volkswagen. From the WW2 Kübelwagen to the 181 (or 'The Thing' in the US), they have graced the world's roads, and still do, though in decreasing numbers.

In July 1968, *Safer Motoring* magazine revealed another variation on the theme. Pretty it wasn't, but practical? Well, yes, maybe.

The Beetle Bush Buggy, as we dubbed it, was the Type 197 – an all-new production model dreamed up by Volkswagen Australasia Ltd at their plant in Clayton, Victoria and officially named the VW Country Buggy. Claimed to be the first VW designed solely by the Australian factory, it was tested for over three years in some of the world's most inhospitable terrain – the Australian outback.

> "VW of Australia had originally intended to make the Country Buggy amphibious, but German bosses rejected this"

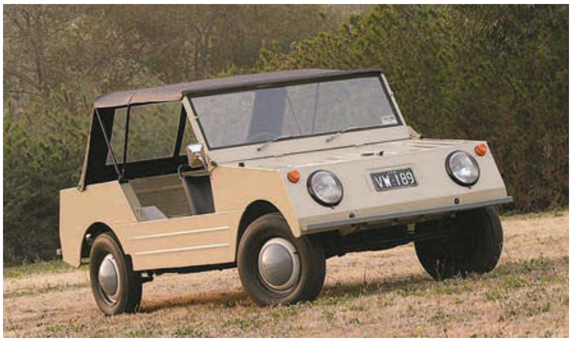
Volkswagen Australia's advertising for the vehicle was headed, "Here comes the wildest Volkswagen in the '68 revolution." It continued: "Even places that make regular VWs baulk don't bother the Country Buggy. It has big 15in wheels [now where have we come across those before?] and better than 9in ground clearance…You can have it with the VW 1200 or the 1300 engine…Most parts are interchangeable with regular VW parts, so any VW dealer can service your Country Buggy."

Of very square, minimalist appearance, the Buggy's simple body was of pressed steel and sat on an Australian-made Type 1 floorpan. The front axle was also from a Type 1, while the rear swing-axles had the reduction gears from the first generation VW Transporter (1950-67). The spare wheel and tools were stored in a lockable front compartment.

And this was its rival in the UK, the altogether more hairy-chested Volksrod Dune Buggy…

The two adjustable front seats were provided with safety belts, but the cramped rear appeared suitable for emergency use only. The vinyl fabric roof canopy was removable and the windscreen was collapsible, while an optional fibreglass hardtop with removable sidescreens gave more protection if required.

Electrics were 6-volt, the transmission a standard Beetle/Type 2 mix, and vital statistics were: Length, 12ft 2.4in; Height, 5ft 1.3in (screen up) or 3ft 10.9in (screen down); width, 5ft 4.7in; wheelbase, 7ft 10.5in; track, 4ft 6.2in (front), 4ft 5.5in (rear).



^ Achingly angular Country Buggy was perfect for tackling the Australian Outback

VW of Australia had originally intended to make the Country Buggy amphibious, but German bosses rejected this, and it would certainly have detracted from the car's cost advantage. Some early examples were sent to Wolfsburg for evaluation, where VW was already developing the 181, better suited to its intended markets.

With a number of Country Buggies quickly taken up by Australian sports stars, one was also entered in 1968's gruelling *Daily Express* London to Sydney Rally, although we have no news of its fate.

Global intentions

From the start of production in 1967, exports were made to New Zealand, Singapore and some smaller, Pacific nations, especially the Philippines, where some examples are, it seems, still being restored and kept going. Overall, however, the Country Buggy was not a great success, plagued by some early reliability problems. Total production ended after only a couple of years with just 1,956 vehicles sold, which seems to me to make it the lowest production run of any VW model before or since – unless, of course, you know better!

Fifty years on, few survivors of this rugged runabout are left in service, mostly in obscure locations around the world, where the 'lifestyle' vehicle that was perhaps ahead of its time provides very worthwhile transport.

Safer Motoring's news article compared the Country Buggy to a new British arrival, the Volksrod Dune Buggy which, according to Volksrod's MD, could be made for about £350, including the cost of an old donor Beetle, by "virtually anyone who can handle a hacksaw."

The smart-looking conversion pictured (left) weighed some 6cwt less than a standard Beetle, giving it an excellent power to weight ratio and hence very smart acceleration. The fully road-legal kit included windscreen, roll bar, lamps and nudge bars.

History would go on to confirm that the Volksrod was a very popular buggy that has provided bags of fun for enthusiasts over the ensuing years, with examples still in use today. And I wouldn't be at all surprised if sales had beaten those of the Country Buggy! ■

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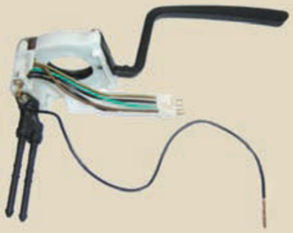

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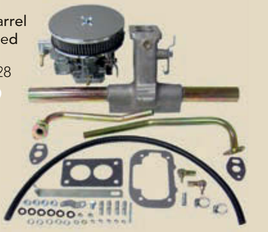

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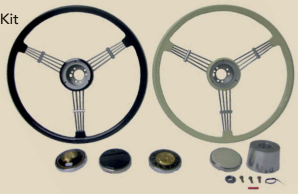

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